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ADOBELAND STORIES



MP.

VERNER Z REED



Arthur C. F. Finner

San Francisco

Feb 1. 1874



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Adobeland Stories

ADOBELAND STORIES

BY

VERNER Z. REED

Author of "Lo-To-Kah" and "Tales of the Sunland"

"Adobeland,— great silent land,
Weird world made up of sky and sand,
Where the mirage mocks, and sand-storms swirl,
And brown peaks brood at the drear, dead world."

BOSTON

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To my Friend

CHARLES CRAIG

IN MEMORY OF MANY PLEASANT DAYS SPENT
TOGETHER, LOITERING, DREAMING, AND
EXPLORING IN ADOBELAND

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Preface

IT would seem that a preface were entirely unnecessary to a book of short stories, many of which have no foundation in fact, and which are meant to be merely stories, pure and simple. A preface would not be written in this case, were it not for the fact that the lack of one to my former book, *Tales of the Sun-Land*, caused considerable misunderstanding. The stories in that book are pure fictions, are meant only as such, and they make no pretensions to historical or ethnological accuracy further than is necessary for the base, or settings, of the tales. I tried, of course, to clothe them with verisimilitude; but I have been disappointed because some of the critics who reviewed the book have mistaken the stories for attempted portrayals of actual legends. The mistake was the more natural on the part of some of the readers of the book because of the fact that I have written down a few actual Indian legends; and I am at fault because I did not write a preface, fully explaining that all the book stood for, or meant to be, was a collection of imaginative tales,

having no foundation in fact, and intended only to be amusing, and, in some slight degree, an approach to things that might have been, but were not.

A preface, then, being sometimes necessary, even to a little book, I make this one. And in it I want to say that these Adobeland stories, like most of the others I have written, have for their chief purpose amusement, and not instruction. It is scarcely necessary to say that Santa Beatriz does not exist, or that Antonio Salcido is mythical. Yet, while the tales are fictions, there are — as with almost all things else in the world — some threads of truth running through some of them. In journeying among the people who dwell in Adobeland, one will see some tragedies, some little romances, and the inner joys and sorrows of some hearts. I have woven a little of some of these things into some of the stories, adorning the facts enough to make them more properly belong to fiction than to reality.

And so, the little book is done, and will soon be beyond me and out of my reach, and where “nor all

my piety nor wit can lure it back to cancel half a line." The making of it, which has been done at intervals and at places far removed, has been a pleasant task; for, as I wrote, there came back memories of pleasant days spent under the blue skies and the bright sun, and among the quaint, brown-skinned peoples of Adobeland,—that sun-kissed land which extends from the Arkansas River in Colorado, southward to the end of my knowledge, and, I think, to the end of the world. There were memories of red-tiled, white-walled old Mexican cities, drowsing in the rays of the tropic sun; of crude Indian homes in the great wind-swept San Juan or in the ancient pueblos of New Mexico; of broad deserts, where living things are few, and where mirages hover on the horizon; of quiet valleys that seem to be just on the edge of the world; and, more than all else, memories of good friends, brown and red and white, with whom I have broken bread and exchanged stories and ridden over the mesas and across the valleys and smoked and enjoyed life, and who have, moreover, helped me to a better understanding of my fellow-men. Some of

these people showed me their hearts, and taught me that heredity and environment, race and blood, belief and creed, all sink into insignificance before the great fact that we are all humans, and that humanity is humanity's nearest kin.

If the stories amuse and entertain their readers, and bring to their minds the recollection that away to the southward and to the westward there is a quaint, picturesque land, full of romance and beauty, and if they shall help a little to spread the truth that human hearts — whether they beat under brown skins or white — are much the same, I shall feel that there is some justification for their existence.

COLORADO SPRINGS,

November, 1898.

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ADOBELAND STORIES

Antonio Salcido's Story

WE were junketing in the old-new land of Mexico. Every hour was worth living; and many of them would have been worth living over again, which can be said of too few of the hours that go to make up the span of a human life. We were enjoying ourselves so much that we grudged the time that had to be spent in sleep. Everything was of interest,—old cathedrals, little mud chapels and shrines, bull rings, haciendas, quartels, the pleasant plazas of the cities, the picturesque architecture, and, most of all, the people,—from the courtly Dons who spoke French and talked of literature and statecraft, to the black Indians who came down from the fastnesses of the Chihuahua Mountains to watch the great “thunder wagons” go screeching and rocking across the deserts.

When we came to Aguas Calientes, we had the strange feeling, so often experienced by travellers, of having reached a place familiar to us, but which in reality we had never seen before, and yet the arriving at which seemed something like coming to our own homes. To us the quaint old flat-roofed city was the

best spot in all Mexico. It is not so beautiful as Guadalajara, nor so picturesque as hill-hemmed Guanajuato, nor so busy as the mountain-girt City of Mexico, nor so quaint as red-tiled old Orizaba. But the beautiful little plaza seemed dimly like a place where we had played in childhood, the palace was like a familiar thing that we had known all our lives, and the booming of the big bells in the cathedral was like well-remembered sounds. And we revelled in the beauty and quaintness and restfulness and half-familiar strangeness of Aguas Calientes. We passed inquisitively through the churches, getting sly glances from the women who knelt upon the hard floors; we struck up acquaintances with the market people who sat on the stone paving of the streets beside their little heaps of merchandise; we wandered among the low-roofed houses, going from the workshops of the weavers of *serapes* and *rebosos* to the low, cool rooms where women and children toiled through all the hours of light over the fine drawn linen work that has made the name of the city famous. And it was in the Arabian Nights city of Aguas Calientes that we first met Antonio Salcido, now a millionaire child of Luck, one time a *peon*, whose story seemed to us worthy of being written down.

We had gone with a guide, in a quaint old coach

drawn by two happy-looking mules, to explore the old *panteon*, or cemetery, that lies at the north-western corner of the city. When tired of looking at old monuments, and having the sexton point out the slabs that covered the bodies of wandering Americans who had died in Mexico long before the coming of the railroads, we drove down the mud-walled street that runs to the south, and stopped at one of the places where the glazed pottery peculiar to that city is made. Standing in the narrow streets were a pedler's two carts, loaded to overflowing with earthenware utensils; and tethered to the wall were the mules that drew the carts. There were picturesque and romantic suggestions about the outfit,—visions of long drives across cactus-covered plains and down winding cañons; thoughts of isolated villages, of far-away mining camps, and of the haunts of Indian tribes, all of which might be visited by these weather-beaten carts and their weather-stained owners in their journeys up and down the land. So we made inquiries, which resulted in our becoming possessed of information. The carts were owned by Antonio Salcido,—who was affable and very much at our service. The three men with him were in his employ, one to help him sell goods, and the others to cook, and care for the mules. He dealt chiefly in the gray ware of Guadalajara,

which is better and finer than any other pottery made in Mexico except the glazed ware wrought by the Tarasco Indians ; but, having been unusually fortunate, he had sold out sooner than he had anticipated, and had bought a new stock in Aguas Calientes to be sold on the remainder of his journey. All of which was true as far as it concerned his three employees, and which was cheerfully untrue so far as it related to Salcido, who had not seen his mules and carts nor the city of Guadalajara for two years. Salcido talked to us in good English. He told us of the value of his wares, of the long journey he was making, which he expected to end somewhere to the south of Silao ; and he said many interesting things about the out-of-the-way villages and haciendas that his vocation caused him to visit. He might not have talked so much if we had not asked so many questions, yet he seemed to enjoy the time as well as we. He was a tall, well-formed man, about thirty-five years of age, and was dressed in a rather faded *charro* costume, consisting of short leather coat, tight leather trousers, a wide felt sombrero, and tan shoes. From his side swung a holster containing a big revolver, a belt of cartridges was about his waist, and he had some fine silver ornaments on his sombrero. We got acquainted with this man because we thought it was worth while ; and he

gave the Señora a little glazed drinking-cup, that now occupies a very exalted place in our collection of curios.

In the evening I met him by chance in the plaza, and we listened to the music of the band and talked for two hours. Then we drank tequila together, expressed our hopes of some time meeting again, and said farewell. In the morning he drove away to the south, ostensibly to sell pottery, but in reality upon a grave errand, of which, at that time, we knew nothing; and we remained in Aguas Calientes to bathe in the mineral waters and mingle like two happy vagabonds in the life of the quaint old town. We remembered dimly that far to the north there was a cold, hard land of banks and mines and stock exchanges, where men were breathlessly hurrying from their cradles to their graves, stopping only to clutch at dollars as they went; but we believed that they were missing the fulness of life, and we forgot them, and enjoyed the tropic sky and the kindly people,—and wondered why so bright a man as Salcido was nothing but a pedler of earthenware.

Some days later we were in Silao, and were quartered at the Hotel St. Julian, then kept by a man who looked as though he had a spite at the world because he chanced to be living in it, and whose wife

was much worse-looking than her husband. In the older days, before the iron hand of Diaz rested like a stern blessing upon all the face of turbulent Mexico, Silao was one of the chief centres of the enterprising bandits who infested the land; and the host and hostess of the inn St. Julian seemed to be perpetually grieving because the old days were gone, and instead of being picturesque banditti they could be only prosaic hotel-keepers. When the supper was over, we left them looking morosely and sourly at each other, and went and sat on one of the stone seats in the alameda, and spent an hour watching the motley crowd of soldiers, beggars, priests, and bandits in disguise, that passed up and down that thoroughfare.

Just below the southern end of the alameda at Silao there is an open field, somewhat resembling the common of Eastern villages. While we were sitting on the stone bench, watching the moon and the people, we chanced to look toward this open place, and saw the ruddy glow of a camp-fire, and busy men cooking, and feeding mules. We strolled over to the camp, and were pleasantly surprised to receive a warm greeting from our friend Antonio Salcido, the *corredor*, or pedler, whom we had met in Aguas Calientes. We passed a pleasant hour, and then the Señora was tired, and went to her room; and, when I returned

from taking her there, Salcido and I seated ourselves on a stone bench, there was some drinking of tequila, some smoking of black cigars from Orizaba, and then the *corredor*, perhaps prompted by the strange desire that causes men to confide in strangers, perhaps influenced somewhat by the tequila, told me his story. And in his own words, as nearly as I can remember them, it is thus: —

“As you know, my name is Antonio Salcido. I own these carts and mules and goods; and I also own houses, and have money loaned out for the interest it will draw. And — while it is known to but few beside myself — I am now a very rich man, — so rich that I can dwell in luxury and splendor in any country in the world. I have been rich for two years; and for two years I have travelled, while my men drove up and down the country with these carts and mules. This journey is the last of its kind that I shall make, and I make it for a far greater purpose than to sell those pots and jars. And I was once a *peon*, had never seen a city, and could not read or write. Is it not strange what changes a few years will make in the life of a man?

“I was born on an hacienda that lies in a valley of the mountains that are east of the great hacienda of Santa Barbara, which place you must have seen on

your way here. My mother and the man who was called my father were in debt to the *hacendado*, as were all the people who dwelt on his lands; and I was taught that I, too, was responsible for those debts, and that because of them I could not leave the employ of my *patron*. I cared not, for I was but a boy. I knew nothing of the world that lay beyond the valley where I was born; and but for the fact that a girl fell into the water of a lake, and was rescued by me, I think I might yet be on that hacienda. And it might be, too, that I would be a happier man if that were true.

“It was rumored that I was not the son of the man who was called my father. When my mother was a girl, and just before she was taken to wife, a young Don, whose name I have never heard, paid a visit to the family of the *patron*. My mother was pretty, and it was said by the old ones that the Don was my father. The man remained on the hacienda but a short time, and his name was not learned by any of the working people. I know not if this tale be true or false; for my mother died when I was yet a boy, and she told me nothing of the matter.

“At first, of course, I did nothing but play in the sand in front of our *jatal*. Then they began to send

me to help the boys with the herds; and, when I had grown older, I was put in charge of a flock of sheep, and much of my time was spent alone, away from the other people.

“When I was almost a man, there came to visit at the hacienda a rich family from Ciudad Aguas Calientes. The family was made up of the father, the mother, a youth a year or two younger than myself, and a Señorita who was fourteen or fifteen years old. They were great friends of our *patron*, and much gayety was known at the great residencia while they were there.

“One day I returned with my sheep, put them safely in the corrals, and was walking alone by the side of the great *presa*, or artificial lake, in which were stored up the waters for irrigation. When I came near a little grove that is on the side of the *presa* farthest from the buildings, I heard a scream. At first, I knew not what to do; but, after standing like a dumb goat for a moment, I ran swiftly to the grove, and saw that a young woman was struggling in the water, and that she was very near to death from drowning. It was the young Señorita who was visiting at the hacienda. Being alone in the grove, she had taken off her shoes to wade in the water and enjoy its coolness; and she had stepped off a steep place, and gone beyond her depth.

“I could swim but little; but I sprang at once into the *presa*, and reached the girl just as she was sinking for the last time. She clung to me, and struggled so violently that at first she carried me into the deeper water and away from the shore. I struggled toward the shore, although I greatly feared that we would both drown; but, just as the last breath seemed leaving my body and the last strength going from my limbs, I got to where I could touch the bottom with my foot. This gave me hope; and I struggled on, and in time reached the bank. We were both so exhausted that, when we reached the bank, we fell down, and lay like two persons who were dead. I recovered strength first, and realized that the Señorita was in great danger from the water she had swallowed. I halloed for help, but none came. Then I took up the almost lifeless body of the girl, placed her, face downward, across a log, and moved her backward and forward, in spite of her groans, until she was well. She soon felt better; but she was very weak, and I ran to my *jacal*, where I had a bottle of mescal concealed, got it, returned to the maiden, and poured some of it down her throat. The liquor warmed her blood and put life into her, and soon she sat up and was almost well. She wrung the water from her clothes, with my *serape* she dried her face and hands, and then she sat down on the stump of a tree and looked at me.

“It is the truth, Señor, that in all my life, asleep or awake, I had never seen or dreamed of any one so beautiful as was that girl. Her hair was soft and long, and as black as the rain-clouds of summer. The light of the dawn had gotten into her dark eyes, and her form was as are the forms seen in the most beautiful pictures in the cathedrals. She smiled upon me; she took my hand in hers, and kissed it; and she thanked me for saving her life, I remaining silent all the time, for I knew not what to say. She then asked my name. I answered: —

“ ‘My name is Antonio Salcido. I am of the herdsmen, and it was by chance that I passed here and heard you scream. You need not thank me, for I have done only what a man should do.’

“She then offered me her purse, which I refused to take; and I think she saw in my face that I was grieved that she should think I would take hire for saving her life. She then said to me: —

“ ‘Antonio, my name is Marie Concepcion Trevino. I dwell in the city of Aguas Calientes, and with my parents I am visiting at this hacienda. While you are but a *pilado*, you are in all ways like a gentleman. You have done me a great service,— you have saved my life,— and from this time forth I shall be your friend. Tell me, is there anything I

can do for you? My life is full and rich, yours must be empty and poor, and there must be something I can do to make you happier. Tell me what it is.'

"Being alone so much in the desert with the sheep, and spending my time in thinking and dreaming of things far removed from the poverty of my life, caused me to be different in many ways from the class to which I belonged, else I should not have dared to do as I did. As I gazed into her beautiful eyes, I forgot for a moment that she was rich and I was poor, that she was a lady and I but a *peon*. I knew only that I was young and she was young, that I knew not fear, and that she was more beautiful than a dream. And I said to her: —

"'Señorita, in saving you I have given myself more happiness than I ever knew before in all the years of my life. I would give my life rather than that you should be injured in the least. I desire no reward, and would take none. But, if you will, you can make me happier than though you should give me all the wealth in the world. You are more beautiful than any woman I shall ever see again in this world or the next; and, if you will let me hold you in my arms but for an instant, and press your lips in one single kiss, I shall be happier than though I were a saint.'

“The maiden gazed upon me for a moment with a shy smile upon her face, then a mist came into her eyes, and then she impulsively threw her arms about my neck, and pressed upon my lips a kiss that was sweeter than any other kiss ever given to a man by a woman since the world began. She then said,—

“‘This must be kept as a secret between us.’ And, turning, she ran down the path and out of the grove.

“I saw her by stealth a few times, and we grew very fond of each other; but soon she and her family returned to their home, and I thought she would soon forget me. But the young priest who dwelt on our hacienda came to me, and said that the young Señorita had asked him to teach me; and he began to give me instruction. And then I found that my work was made easier for me, and favors of many kinds were shown me. The priest said the young Señorita had spoken to the *patron* about me. For two years more I dwelt on the hacienda, spending much of my time in study, but never hearing a word from the beautiful girl whose memory was in my mind by night and by day.

“And then my *patron* died; and I was told that he had forgiven me my debts and that I was free. A few dollars were given me, and I was told that I

might go away if I cared to. And I walked all the way to Aguas Calientes, hoping that, if I dwelt in that city, I might some day see the beautiful Marie.

“I hired a poor lodging far out on Calle Ojo Caliente; and every day I walked in the plaza and on the streets, hoping to see her whom I sought. It was not long until my money was all gone, and I had to seek employment. I had been taught to braid the rush mats used in so many houses; and I found employment at this work, going from house to house, and weaving the mats to fit the rooms where they were to be used. A young man was my partner in this work, and he knew all the great houses in the city. One day he told me we were to go to repair mats at the house of Señor Trevino; and my heart almost burst with joy, for I thought I might then be able to see Marie. I knew the house, and I had haunted its outer walls so much that I feared the gendarmes would suspect me of trying to rob it; but I had never seen Marie even once.

“We went the next day, and worked on a mat that was in a big room on the second floor. In the afternoon my companion felt ill, and went to his home; and I worked on alone. And, after I had worked for an hour or two, Marie, and an old woman who was her duenna, came into the room. My head was

bent low over the mat; and I feared to look up, for I thought I should faint. But tears came into my eyes, and I could not refrain from looking at her. She knew me at once, she called out my name, and then she looked upon me with love shining from her wondrous eyes.

“‘Marie,’ said the duenna, ‘what does this mean? How is it that you know this man, and what is he to you that you should look so upon him?’

“‘It is Antonio, nurse,—he of whom I told you,’ said Marie. ‘Now, if you love me, and will be a good nurse, go and leave us alone.’

“And the duenna, to whom the slightest wish of her mistress was law, went away and left us alone. Marie gazed at me for a moment, and my fear left me. Again I forgot that I was poor and she was rich. Again I forgot all but that I loved her, and again I took her in my arms. I had suffered much in longing for her, and I wept as I held her. And she told me that she loved me as much as I loved her.

“She said her family had gone away after the time of the siesta, and she and the duenna were alone in the house, and we would be safe until five o’clock. And then we sat, clasped in each other’s arms, and were happier than people can be but a few times in life. She was as beautiful as a dream, as innocent as

a babe; and she loved me with all the fervor and purity of a first love. And, when it seemed that only an instant had passed, it was time for me to go.

“I went to the house the next day to complete my task, but I saw nothing of Marie; but a few days after an old priest sought me at my lodging, and told me a friend of mine and his had engaged him to instruct me, and that I was not to pay him. He taught me English, he gave me many books to read; but I could never get him to talk of the friend who had sent him, and whom I knew to be Marie.

“One morning at sunrise I was standing by the western gate of the garden of San Marcos, when Marie and the duenna passed by, going to early mass. They saw me, the duenna stepped forward, and for a moment my loved one lay in my arms. But before we had said a dozen words I was rudely grasped; and her brother stood before us, his face writhing in passion.

“‘Go away,’ said Marie to me. ‘Go away, and do not fight my brother; for he will kill you.’

“I turned, and went away; and that afternoon a woman I did not know stopped me on the street and gave me a note. It was from Marie. It said she was locked in her room in disgrace for having been seen in the arms of a common *pilado*, and that her

brother had sworn to kill me on sight. She said for me to walk to the old baths, below the city, at sundown, and I would be met by some one who would tell me what to do. So I remained in my room all day, and at sundown I walked to the baths. There I was met by the duenna, who — hastily, and with many looks up and down the road — told me she had intended to bring money to me, but her mistress could not give it to her without exciting suspicion; and she told me to go to the town of Mapimi, far to the north, where I should go to a *cantiña* called the *Cantiña* of the Desert, kept by a man whose wife had been Marie's first nurse, and who had raised her until she was twelve years old. This nurse had married and gone to Mapimi, and she would fall down and worship the devil himself if Marie Trevino should so command her. The duenna said I would find money awaiting me with this woman, and then I must leave Mexico, or at any rate keep away from Aguas Calientes; and, when she had given her message, she hastened away as though she were pursued by evil spirits.

“I turned to walk back to the city to get my few belongings before setting out to Mapimi, and on the way I met the brother of Marie on horseback. When he saw me, his face turned livid, and he cut me across the face with his riding whip.

“I had tried to evade the man, but the blow of his whip was something I would not brook. I grasped him by the leg, drew him from his horse, and soon he was lying breathless and senseless in the dust, while his frightened horse raced back to the city. I knew the man was only stunned, and not killed; but I knew I should be thrown into prison if it were known that I had fought him. So, without getting my belongings, and with but a little money in my pocket, I turned my face to the north, and set out on the long journey to Mapimi in the desert.

“I am a prosperous man now, and know what it is to be able to eat when I hunger and to sleep at night in a bed. I am rich, too; but that is a newer thing. Yet I am assured by it that the future holds much of luxury and comfort for me. But when my thoughts turn back to that terrible journey to Mapimi, or when I dream of it at night, my heart turns cold, and I feel that death would be welcome now if I thought I should have again to face anything so terrible. In all the country north of Zacatecas—that sterile country that is poor enough at best—there had been a drought for years. The land was parched, the poor huts of the *peons* were tumbling down from dry decay, the grass was withered, and the trees drooped and died. The poor people drowsily

slept in the sun, for there was no work to do; and the naked and half-starved children were too listless to even play.

“I would not beg; and, even if I had, I would have fared badly, for, while our poor people are generous, they, like all people, think first of themselves. I bought food with what little money I had, and then I existed by doing odd pieces of work. My food was never more than a few *tortillas* and a handful of beans, and often it was nothing. I slept at night on the dry sands, and in the mornings I awoke and staggered forward on my weary way. The merciless sun would beat down on me, and I would be so hot and thirsty that I could hear my own blood surging and ringing in my ears. Sometimes I could see the mirages far off by the mountains. Lakes of shimmering blue would spread, seemingly, for miles; trees could be seen growing upon the banks; and sometimes there would be towns and ships, or green fields with cattle and sheep feeding on the grass. Then the mirage would fade, and again would be the deadening sun and the swirling eddies of hot sands that beat into my face and the hunger that was gnawing my vitals. I grew thin and lean, my clothes wore out, my sandals were but strips of leather tied to my feet, my hat had been bartered for food, and my un-

kempt hair was bound only in a strip of old cloth. And it was thus — starving, discouraged, suffering, almost ready to lie down on the cruel sands and die — that I came to Mapimi in the desert, and found there that the power of Marie Trevino's love had gone before me, and had prepared a welcome, and food and clothes and money and hope for me.

“A letter had gone before me to the wife of the keeper of the *cantiña*, and in it was three hundred dollars in money. I was given food, clean and strong clothes were bought for me, and I was a welcome guest in the house of friends. I remained a few weeks, resting and regaining strength, and talking to men who came down to Mapimi from the mines. Then I went to the mines myself, formed a partnership with a man experienced in seeking veins of mineral-bearing rock, and for two years I remained. Then, my money being nearly gone, and I suffering for news of Marie, I left our mining claims with my partner, and made my way to the city of Aguas Calientes.

“I found that Marie and her family were again visiting at the old hacienda in the mountains that had been my home; and, as I did not desire to go there, I walked across the hills and valleys to Guadalajara,— that fair city that seems like a dream of Paradise,—

and there I invested my few remaining dollars in pottery work, and set out as a *corredor*, or pedler. I went on foot at first, and at night slept under trees or by hedges. But I thrived, and soon bought a burro. In time I owned a cart, and had spare money in my belt. And then, being well dressed and prosperous, I went again to Aguas Calientes; and this time I found Marie.

“The old priest, who was her friend, and who had befriended me and instructed me, was upon his bed of death. Marie visited him often; and after meeting me in the street, and leaving me after a hasty word of welcome and love, she told the priest that I was again in that city, and that she longed to see me. The priest was a man who had looked deep into the hearts of people, and he said to Marie that he had learned that love was the only thing that mortals ever knew that made life bearable or worth living; and he said she might meet me in his house, where we would be safe and free. We met there, and from dark till the rising of the sun we were happier than I ever hope to be again. Our meeting was clandestine, and we knew that it might be years before we should see each other again. But with youth's faculty for enjoying, without forebodings of the future, we loved, and loved, and were happy. I

could tell you of what we said, and did, and hoped, and prayed, and enjoyed; but all people who have loved need not be told, for they can divine these things. And when, in later and unhappy years, I have prayed for death,—for sweet, peaceful, untroubled death,—I have prayed that at least once in the eternity of the future of souls I may know one more such blissful time as I knew that night.

“Before we could meet there again, the priest died; and, as it was not safe for me to remain in that city, I went again upon my journeys with my mules and cart. I thought always of Marie. I dreamed of her at night, and in imagination I saw her every hour of the day; but two years passed before I heard of her again. For, although I loved her, I am a gentleman; and I knew she would be disgraced if the secret of our love should come to her high-born friends in Aguas Calientes, and I did not go there.

“Then again I went to Aguas Calientes, and in the plaza I met Marie’s duenna. I spoke to her, she knew me, and she said that if I would be in the same place on the following evening, she would come to me with a message. She came, put a letter in my hands, and fled as though she feared I was possessed of some disease that would contaminate her. I opened the letter and held it in my hand, looking at it for a long

time before I read it. I think I felt much as does a soul when it goes before the great seat of judgment. The letter might tell me that Marie still loved me, and that she would go away with me from the splendors and unhappiness of her life, and be happy with me. I hoped this, too; for my mine was earning profits, and my business had thrived, and I could keep her in comfort. But it might be, too, that the letter would say that she no longer loved me, that maturer years had brought better knowledge, and she knew her love had been but the fantasy of a girlish fancy. I looked at the letter, wondering whether it were a blessed messenger of joy or an accursed harbinger of evil. And then I read it, and found that it was neither and both.

“She wrote me that she loved me with a purer, truer, more devoted love than she had bestowed upon me before,—loved me so much that she prayed for me constantly, and pitied me more than she did any one in the world, not excepting herself,—that she would love me always, as the Virgin loves her devotees, as a mother loves her babe, or as a sister loves her brother; but that she could not love me as sweethearts love, or as wives love their husbands. She said that her father was dead, that the fortunes of the family were ruined, and that she soon was to be mar-

ried to a man she did not love and could never love, but whom she respected and venerated.

“And that was all. And from then until now I have had no faith in women and but little in men, and sometimes my faith in God has wavered; for I had placed all my trust and faith and hope at that woman’s feet, and had believed in her, and believed in all good things because of my belief in her. Yet, with flimsy platitudes and empty protestations of an empty kind of love, she had cast me aside. She had said I was never to see her, and I knew that I could go out of her life with no more pain to her than a child feels at casting aside a broken toy. And I wandered up and down the streets of the city, striving to make myself believe I hated her, and finding that I loved her as much as I did when she had nestled in my arms, pressed her lips to mine, and swore she loved me above her hopes for her soul’s salvation. That was the pity of it. If I could have hated her it would have been better for me; but, in all the years that have passed since then, I cannot learn to hate her nor to lessen my love for her by one jot or one iota.

“I no longer feared the danger of disgracing her, and I no longer moved in secrecy. I met her brother in the street, stopped him, challenged him to fight me with knives or pistols, and was surprised that he

went from me, looking at me with more of an expression of pity than of fear or hatred. I met the duenna again, and she tried to avoid me; but I grasped her arm and made her talk. She said but little, telling me only that the Señorita could not see me, and that she was soon to wed. And then, being a woman, she gave utterance to the trouble that was nearest her heart, which was that the family fortunes were in such ruin that her mistress could not buy a wedding outfit suited to a handsome woman who was to wed a rich man, and that pride forbade the fact being made known to the man.

"I was almost in a frenzy of disappointment and desperation and thwarted love; but at the same time I felt sorry for the woman that I so madly loved, and I took five hundred dollars from my belt, pressed it in the hand of the duenna, and told her to see to it that Marie was wed as became a lady. I told her, too, that it was but paying back a debt I had owed ever since I got the money at Mapimi. And then I rushed away from the old duenna, who stood weeping in the street.

"I drove with my carts to this town of Silao, scarcely trying to trade on the way. And, when I came here, I became drunken, and shouted through the streets, and fought men who spoke to me, and

terrorized even the peace officers of the place. And then I left my business with hired men, and went to my mines in the north.

“Five years have gone by since then, Señor,—five miserable years that seem to me like five hopeless eternities. I learned that Marie was wed to a rich man of Guanajuato, and dwells now in a home that is like a palace, and that she is loved by all the people of that city. Once each year I send one of my men to that city; and he sells the wares of Guadalajara, and at the same time learns all he can of Marie and her husband and her life. He can be trusted; and he can find out all things, for the serving-women of Marie talk to him, and they know of her life.

“Well, in five years I have found that I cannot kill my love for her. I have learned, too, that she is unhappy, and that there is no love between her and her husband. Knowing this meant nothing to me until I went to Aguas Calientes two years ago. There I met my old partner of the mines, an old man whose hair is now gray, and whom I trust as myself. When I was last at the mines they were earning a profit; but, soon after I left, a rich ledge of quartz was found, and my partner sold the mines to some Americans for two million Mexican dollars. He went to Aguas Calientes to meet me and tell me

the good news; and together we went by train to the City of Mexico, where I bought English exchange with my money. When my money was in my pocket, I thought first of going to Marie to see if my wealth would not tempt her to fly with me and leave her unloved husband. But I conquered myself, and went instead to the United States. For two years I have been away from Mexico, journeying like one to whom all places are hateful. I have wandered from New Orleans to San Francisco, then to New York, then to London and Paris. But all the time my desire has been with the wife of a man who is a stranger to me, and all the time I have been resistlessly drawn toward her. At last I could stand it no longer. My wealth seemed like a hateful thing to me, the cities I visited seemed like hollow and lifeless places; and I returned to Mexico, donned again my old costume, because it is an effectual disguise, and, with the men who have been in my employ all the time I was away, I am now on my way to Guanajuato. My fortune has not been dissipated. I have it all in drafts. The drafts are now safely sewed into my belt; and I am here with my carts and mules only because as a pedler I can more surely see Marie when I reach Guanajuato than I could if I went as a rich Señor. When I reach Guanajuato and have seen her,

no matter how my visit results, I shall give my carts to my men, and Mexico shall know me no more.

“Señor, I am journeying to Guanajuato to strive to induce the Señora Marie to elope with me. I love her so much that I am willing to sin so much as that for the chance of being happy with her. I think she has been unfaithful to me,—that she is as a woman who casts her virtue from her; for a woman who is false to her plighted lover is but as a harlot, even though she be wedded and true to her husband. I have thought of all these things. I have tried to bring before my eyes the time that will surely come when my loathing for her infidelity will grow stronger than my love, and I shall come to hate her. That time will come; and, when it does, I may go insane. I may kill her and then kill myself, I may become so low that I will keep on living with her, drowning my hatred for her faithlessness in drink and dissipation; but I pray that I may yet be enough of a man so that I shall then give her my fortune, and go from her forever. It is not that future time that troubles me, though; for now my love and my longing and my deferred hope are so strong that I am willing to have her love at any price, even to the loss of my self-respect.

“I think she may go with me, for surely she loved

me once ; and, while a woman's love is but a bauble compared with a man's, it cannot be that all that love is gone from her heart. And it may be, too, that I misjudge her, that she is more sinned against than sinning, and that she was forced into her hideous marriage to cover up some dishonor of her father, who died a pauper while telling his family to hide its poverty and not reveal it even to Marie's bridegroom. It must be thus; for gentle Marie, an angel in the form of a loving woman, could not be, cannot be, as vile and false as I have thought she is. No, it cannot be that she is anything but pure and good. And she loves me. And with her I shall find the happiness that I never knew, and together we shall forget the horror of the five years that she has been the unloved and unloving wife of a man whom I hate above all the men in the world. It must be thus, Señor. And I am sorry that I spoke of my doubts of her to you; for deep down in my heart I know she is the purest and best of women, and that her seeming falsity is but some hideous mistake. Forget, Señor, that I spoke doubtingly of her. Forgive me, too, for telling you my doleful tale. I had not meant to tell you so much; but the things that are uppermost in my heart came to my tongue, and I have talked more than I intended. And now good-night."

I saw that the man desired to be alone, and I told him good-night, and left him. I might have said much to him, but I felt that it would all sound hollow and meaningless and empty to him; and I merely pressed his hand.

When I reached the hotel, I turned and looked back at him, and saw him still sitting on the bench, his head hung in his hands. He seemed to me the living embodiment of a tragedy. Fate had been kind to him in giving him the things men deem desirable. He was rich and young and intelligent. He might travel over the world, and dwell in luxury, and do the thing that seemed to him the best to do, if it were not for the hunger in his heart for the love of a school-girl he had met and known and fancied when he was but an ignorant boy. But, after all, the words of the old priest might be true; and it may be that love is the only thing mortals find in their span of life that is worth knowing or having or remembering. And, if that were true, this Mexican was as much to be pitied as though he were yet a *peon*.

The man had laid his heart bare to me, and the sight of it was not pleasant. He loved the woman with a fierce love befitting the fierce blood of his race, and doubted her as fiercely; and yet he strove to believe in her, and keep her memory pure, and to believe that she was not false to him.

I thought idly of how he would fare on this strange expedition,—of how the cultured, luxurious, grand lady would meet the roughly clad man with whom she had been indiscreet when she was young and thoughtless. I believed, of course, that their meeting would be short,—fierce on the man's side and cold on the woman's. And that she would treat him well, or even see him, would be only because he had it in his power to disgrace her in her husband's eyes by telling of the past. I feared for the woman, too; for the Mexican blood is hot and savage, the man was almost crazed, and desperate men are often the embodiments of ferocious fate.

The next morning, when we arose, we noticed that the carts were gone. After strolling through the narrow streets of Silao, we took a train for Guanajuato; and again we began the pleasant task of exploring a Mexican city. We climbed the steep streets, through which no wheeled wagon could go. We visited the *cuartel*, where the soldiers and officers acted as though their sole mission in life was to make our visit pleasant. We climbed to the weird *panteon*, where the mummies of citizens whose names are yet remembered were pointed out to us by a sexton who seemed half ghoul. We listened to the music of the organ in the cathedral, and looked upon the misery

of the prisoners in the ill-starred Alhondiga, made famous by the inspired madness of Hidalgo. We went at night to a quaint ceremony in a church; and the next day we again explored the city, and talked to its people, and enjoyed the strangeness of this quaintest and most picturesque city in all Mexico.

At twelve at night I became restless; and, as the plaza is just in front of the hotel, I went there to smoke a cigar and walk off the restlessness. Homeless brown mothers, with their babes at their breasts, were asleep on the benches in the plaza,—living, suffering evidences of centuries of Mexican wrong. From far up one of the steep streets music could be heard; and the watchmen, with their lanterns, were seen at the corners. Sitting alone on a bench, under the glare of an electric light, I saw a man, his head bowed in his hands, and who was a picture of absolute dejection. I wondered at first if he were drunk. Then I thought he might be one who had risked and lost his all at gaming, and was meditating whether he should go to work and begin his life anew, or blow his brains out. And then he chanced to raise his head; and I saw that it was Antonio Salcido, the former *peon*, the millionaire, the mad lover.

He saw me. At first he turned his eyes away. Then he spoke to me.

“Did you find the lady?” I asked. I felt that the question was almost silly, but the look of abject misery in the man’s eyes made it impossible to say anything sensible or sane or that should be said.

“I have seen her,” said Salcido; and again he dropped his face into his hands.

“And—and she refuses to go with you?” I hazarded. For, like most people who know part of a story, I was anxious to know the sequel, even though it tore the man’s heart to tell me.

“Señor,” said the man, raising his eyes and looking up into the night, “I have seen the woman. She is as pure as an angel. She loves me so much that she would die for me. And, as I have told you so much of my miserable story, I will tell you what more there is. The young Don who came to the hacienda where I was born was the same man who was Marie’s father. He sinned with my mother at the hacienda, and I am his son. Therefore, Marie is my sister. When her father lay on his death-bed, he told her; and she knew I was her brother. It was because of this that I could not see her five years ago in Aguas Calientes. It was because of this that she married. It was because of this that she is almost as unhappy as I am. And,—and the worst of it is, friend, that death will not come

to those who pray so much for it, and whose only hope is for it and in it.”

The man relapsed again into silence; and I was silent, too, for I felt that I was in the presence of a grief too deep to be spoken of with idle words. After a time the man again spoke to me. He said: —

“I had a lover, and wanted her for a wife. Instead of as a lover or wife, God has given her to me as a sister. I know not whether I should forgive God or ask God to forgive me.”

Santa Beatriz

ONE autumn day an American traveller was leisurely journeying down a small agricultural valley in one of the central states of the great Mexican plateau. He had as guide a Mexican, who had driven him from a city in a buckboard drawn by two wiry mules. He travelled slowly, as he had no reason for making haste; and each fresh scene was so interesting that he was loath to leave it.

The water of acequias rippled in the stone-walled fields, corn, beans, alfalfa, and melons grew in odd little plats, groves of orange-trees lent color to the landscape, and brown mountains rose skyward in the farther distance. They passed haciendas built like fortresses, commanding great estates, where hundreds of poor *peons* toiled like slaves, so that their masters might live in profligate splendor. In every village and at every hacienda there arose the cross that indicated the chapel, and the driver reverently bared his head to each of them. Occasionally a man astride an ambling, sleepy burro, or an ox-team drawing a creaking wooden-wheeled cart, would be met; and sombreros were always raised to the stranger. And over all was the matchless sky of Mexico,—that sky of perfect blue, whose color can be seen in no other place except in a baby's eyes.

The day was fine, the air delicious, the surroundings picturesque; and the traveller leaned back in his seat, and enjoyed himself to perfection. The driver babbled away on simple themes, explaining the points of interest, and recounting little anecdotes of the people who dwelt in the valley. He had been as far to the north as San Antonio. He prided himself on his English speech, and he sometimes spoke to the traveller in that language. The driver's jargon was little heeded by the traveller, whose mind was busy, in an indolent way, with musing on the lot and the life of the people in whose land he was a sojourner. It seemed to him that the ceaseless rush for wealth and the greed for place that prevailed in his own country, and which engrossed him as it did his fellows, was a species of madness; that the better way for life to be spent would be to have a cot and a little field in this fair valley, where the sky was always blue and the air always fresh, and where the songs of the birds could always be heard coming from the hedges and groves.

As the afternoon sun was dipping toward the range of jagged hills, the travellers came to an hacienda that was much larger and more pretentious than any they had seen in the valley. The "residencia" was of two stories, was built around a patio, and was large enough

to have given shelter to a regiment of men. Groves of oranges, prickly pears, and thunder-trees surrounded it; and the tops of some towering cottonwoods could be seen above its walls. Joined to the residence was a great building, also built around a patio, with walls slit in a hundred places with portholes for rifles, and with a sentry-box at each corner. The windows of both buildings were barred with iron, and the great gate that was the means of entrance was closed and locked. Instead of the miserable hamlet of *jacals* that usually flanks the great buildings of an hacienda, there were but a few cottages; and they were embowered in vines and surrounded by trees and blooming roses. At a little distance were some large corrals; and surrounding all the buildings were numerous fields, all larger and better tilled than any the travellers had seen on their journey, and each containing a well-built little house. The traveller noticed that a cross surmounted the gateway to the residencia, and that a much larger cross arose from within the enclosure. The place, however, seemed deserted. No men were at work, and no sign of life came from the great buildings. The traveller supposed it to be the hacienda of some rich *patron*, to whom many or all of the poorer residents of the valley were *peoned*. He noticed, too, with some surprise, that songs came from

the laborers in the fields, and that the few men he had met near the place seemed to have happy faces, and did not wear the look of patient misery and hopeless resignation that is seen upon the faces of the down-trodden millions of Mexican laborers.

“Whose house is this, Sanchez?” he asked of his guide.

“I do not know,” stammered Sanchez, looking steadfastly away from his companion.

“Why is it that you do not know this place, when you know every hacienda and *jacal*, every man and woman, in the valley? Come, tell me whose hacienda this is.”

Sanchez was making heroic efforts to whip his lazy mules into a brisker trot and leave the place; but his guest took the lines, and stopped the team. Sanchez then explained that it was not good for them to remain there, that strangers were not liked, that there might even be danger.

“Danger of what?” asked the impatient traveller. “Is this place a prison, or a convent, or an insane asylum?”

“It—it is private,—very, very private,” stut-tered the driver. “The people who dwell here do not like visitors. Travellers hasten always by this place, and it is better that they should. We must

go.” And he hit the patient mules resounding whacks with his braided whip.

Just then the big gate of the place swung open, and two tall Mexicans took their stand at either side of the entrance. They looked straight ahead of them, seeming not to see the two men in the buckboard.

“We must go! We must go!” said Sanchez, nervously trying to take the lines from his companion.

“Why must we go? What harm are we doing here? Unless you give me some good reason for your foolish fright, I shall stay here all the afternoon, and then try to secure lodging at this place for the night.”

“No, Señor, no! Believe me, it is not well that we tarry here. We must go from here instantly. It is forbid that strangers tarry here.”

“Forbid by whom? Why must we go unless we want to?”

The face of the *carretaro* writhed. He made spasmodic clutches at the lines, which his companion held in a firm grasp; and finally he said: —

“This is the house of the Santa Beatriz. It is the hour when she goes forth to walk in the air. You are not known to Santa Beatriz. You are a stranger, and you have not faith. It is not allowed that the unfaithful look upon her face.”

At this juncture a man, dressed in solemn black, and bearing a staff of hickory wood, walked out from the gateway, and, waving his billet toward the buckboard, said the single sententious word, "*Vamos!*"

The terror of the driver increased. He seemed half-minded to throttle the foolish traveller, take the lines from his grasp by sheer force, and hasten away.

But the American, thinking he was upon the track of a mystery, would not have moved if he had been commanded by half the soldiers in Mexico.

The man with the staff stood stock-still, surprised that his command had not been obeyed; but before he could repeat it there emerged from the gateway a young girl, followed by a wrinkled old duenna. The man with the staff took off his hat and bowed reverently, for the instant utterly ignoring the men in the buckboard. The two men at the gate also bowed, and then followed the women, keeping at a respectful distance behind, and occasionally casting malignant glances at the intruding strangers.

The young woman who emerged from the great gateway caused the traveller to stare in astonishment. She seemed to him to be the most beautiful woman he had ever seen, and he had a strange feeling that he knew her or had once known her. She was of medium height. Her figure, as it was disclosed by

her loose silken gown, was perfect in its proportions; and her eyes were of that marvellous shade of black that poets dream of and can never find words to describe. Her hair was long and silken and black, and fell over her fair brow in a pretty confusion. Her complexion was as clear as a rose petal, and she walked with the lissome elasticity of perfect health. She was clad in a loose white robe, with short sleeves. On her head was a white lace mantilla, and diamonds glistened on her arms, wrists, and fingers. She walked a few paces with her eyes cast upon the ground in what seemed pleasant thought, for she smiled slightly. Then she looked about her, and her gaze fell upon the two men in the buckboard. She cast her hand to her face in a pretty gesture of surprise, then approached the wagon and saluted the strangers in Spanish, with a voice whose accents seemed sweeter to the traveller than any he had ever heard before. The driver took off his hat and bowed as though he were in the presence of the Holy Mother; and the traveller gravely bowed, but made no reply, as for the moment he was too much embarrassed and impressed to speak.

The old duenna clutched nervously at the sleeve of the girl, striving to have her ignore the trespassers and go with her. The three Mexicans, who

seemed to be the girl's guard, huddled close together, tightly gripping their staffs, and evidently only awaiting a word of command before springing upon the strangers and driving them away. The Señorita continued to smile upon the stranger, and paid no heed to her companions. Sanchez, the driver, seemed greatly frightened, and began belaboring the mules, and trying to take the lines from his companion.

"Sanchez, you dolt, be quiet! The Señorita will think that we are both half-witted," said the traveller, in English.

The terrified driver had no chance to reply, for the young lady instantly said:—

"So it is the English tongue that you speak, Señor? I speak in the English the same as though I had been born to a mother of that blood; and I have known how to speak it ever since I can remember,—so long that it seems to me I was born with the knowledge of that language in my brain. But you are the first English-speaking man I have ever seen, except my teachers, who were Mexicans and Spaniards. Is it not strange?"

The traveller was at a loss how to answer this beautiful vision that addressed him so familiarly. He had seen no such woman in Mexico, and he felt a

shyness and hesitation that were new to him. Finally he awkwardly said:—

“I am pleased, Señorita, to find one in a strange land who speaks so well the language of my own country. I am a traveller journeying in Mexico for the pleasure of seeing the country and its people.”

The girl looked closely at him for a moment. Her expression changed; and, turning to her companion, she said rapturously, in English:—

“It is he, duenna! It is the man! It is he for whose appearance I have so long waited, and whose coming I have foretold to my people for so many years. Smile and look glad, and rejoice with me; for this is the happiest meeting in all my life!”

The duenna gave no answer to her charge, but, addressing the stranger, said:—

“There are many things, Señor, that we cannot explain to you; and it may be that you do not care for explanations. But, if you will go on your way, and forget this hacienda and the people you have seen here, it may be that you will be happier for having done so.”

“Silence!” said the girl. “If you say one word more to the stranger to-day, I will believe that you do not love me. Do you have so little faith that you think I can be mistaken?”

“You may not be mistaken; but, even if you are not, I think it better for the stranger to go his way,” said the duenna, quietly.

The girl did not answer her; but turning to the traveller with a radiant smile, she said: —

“You have come from afar. You have journeyed through the heat of the day, and along roads that are cheerless and devoid of beauty. You have had no companions save fools and those of dull understanding. But at the end of your journey you have found me; and I will cause you to be so happy that you will forget the fatigues and weariness you knew while coming to me. Now alight, come within, and you and I will forget that anything but peace and joy has a place in the lives of mortals.”

As though to assist him to alight, she held her soft hand up to him. He took the hand mechanically, but sat still upon the buckboard seat.

“You may kiss it,” said the girl, looking at her hand.

The traveller kissed her hand, his instinctive admiration for her lending grace to the act.

“Now alight, and come.”

The man alighted from the wagon, forgetting to give any directions to his driver, and with the girl walked toward the gate of the house. As they went, she smiled into his face, and said: —

“Look around you, and see the beauties of the place to which you have journeyed in order that you might be with me. See the haze that hovers over the mountains in the far distance. Look upon the stretches of mesa lands that rise from the valleys and extend as far as our eyesight can carry. And in the valley see the peaceful homes, the fertile fields, the granaries bursting with riches, and the contented people as they go about their toils with light hearts and happy faces and with songs upon their lips. Have you ever in all your life seen so fair a land as is this one which is my home?”

“Never in all my life,” said the traveller, fervently. “And never have I seen so fair a face as yours, nor received so royal a welcome from a stranger.”

“But we are not strangers, you and I,” replied the girl.

They passed into the arched gateway, the attendants baring their heads as they passed the cross; and, when they were within, the stranger gasped with astonishment at the scene of beauty before him. The patio was large, containing almost an acre of land; and the portals of the house faced upon it from all sides. Trees and beds of flowers and climbing vines grew all about, and the patio was carpeted with a well-kept

lawn. Fountains played in various parts of the enclosure, and at intervals there were statues of the finest marble. Mosaic walks of many-colored stones crossed the enclosure; and divans, easy-chairs, and couches were upon the verandas. Quiet servants passed silently from door to door about their work, and some blooded dogs were lying asleep in the shade.

“This is my park,” said Beatriz. “Under the shade of the *portales* I read and dream; and, now that you are with me, this place will be dearer to me than it ever was before.”

The stranger wondered what sort of woman this was. At first he had thought that she was some heiress, and this her ancestral home, where she ruled with almost the power of old feudal times, as such things are not unknown in the interior of Mexico. Then the thought came to him that she might be demented, for her actions and speech seemed to go almost to the limits of sanity. Then he remembered of having heard of women dwelling in remote regions of Mexico, who are believed by the ignorant peasantry to be endowed with holy powers, and who are worshipped as saints; and, as this woman was called Santa Beatriz, he concluded that she was one of these. But the magnetism of her presence took such hold upon him that he did not give much time to idle

speculation, allowing himself instead to enjoy the happy present and wait for explanations to come when the time was ripe for them. So he walked across the patio with the girl, smiling when she smiled, saying to himself that already he believed he loved this girl more than he had ever believed it possible to love a woman, and wondering at the strange feeling he had of having known her long and well at some time in the past.

Beatriz led the way across the patio, under the wide veranda, through a cool wide hall, into the interior of the house. First they entered a room the walls of which were dead white, which had but one small window set high in the wall, and which was but scantily furnished for so large a room. A white carpet was upon the floor; and in the centre of the room was a pallet, or couch, that had raised sides, which gave only enough room for one person to lie between them. It seemed like a cradle upon the legs of a bed. By the side of this couch was a small white table, upon which was a small bell, a pitcher and glass, and a plate of fruit. At one side of the room was an opening into another room, or hall; and this opening was closely checkered with strong iron bars, while behind the bars were a large easy-chair and a footstool, both upholstered in white silk.

“This is the room of the light,” said Beatriz, simply, as they passed through it.

They entered an adjoining room, as superbly furnished as any Parisian boudoir, which the girl said was her sleeping-room. They then went again through the white room into the one opening into it from the opposite side; and the girl, with a slight bow and a smile, said:—

“This is your room. You see I shall have you near me all the time. When I am seeking the light, you can leave your door ajar, and see that all is well with me; and, when I have found the light and am tired, here you and I can have our lunches served, and I can talk to you and look upon you while you rest and smoke. Is it not a pretty room?”

It was, indeed. It was of great size. The carpets were so soft that the feet sank within them, fine pictures were upon the walls, a book-case was in a corner, there was a writing-desk, and a sideboard, upon which were decanters, ash-trays, and cigars. It was a veritable bachelor’s snuggerly, with big easy-chairs, and footstools and divans, as well as all manner of little comforts dear to the masculine heart. An electric button was in the wall, which the girl pressed, and a servant appeared.

“Wait upon the stranger. He has travelled far,

and is dust-stained and weary. Bathe him, and bring him slippers and a loose gown," said the woman. "I will go now; but, when you are refreshed, I will come again, and we shall eat together." And, with a graceful courtesy, she left the room.

The servant was a trained valet; and he assisted the man in making a fresh toilet, and brought him slippers and a light dressing-gown. The traveller tried to gain some information concerning his strange hostess from the servant, but the man would say no word. Soon a woman came, and announced that "Our lady awaits the stranger"; and he was conducted to a cool place on the veranda, where a lunch of fruits and wines was served, and where his beautiful hostess awaited him. During the meal she talked to him as though she had known him for years,—as though he were, indeed, her lover returned to her from a long absence; and the stranger forgot his reserve, and felt as though he had known her forever. After the luncheon she gave him a fragrant cigar, and smiled upon him as he smoked.

"Tell me of yourself," said he, as he leaned back in his luxurious chair, and gazed into the sweet face by his side. "Who are you, from whence did you come to this place, and why is it the people here seem to worship you, and obey your slightest com-

mand, and pay you homage as though you were a queen? ”

“I see I have much to teach you,” said the girl, smiling. “I thought it might be that you, too, knew the secret of finding the light, and knew of me before you came. But in time I can make all those things known to you. Now to tell you of myself. I am Santa Beatriz, saint by inspiration, to whom all things are made clear. I was born in this house eighteen years ago, and the blood in my veins is Spanish blood. My mother was gifted in a degree with what is known as second sight ; and my father was a devout man of much learning, who was known to all the great priests of Mexico. My mother died in giving me birth; and my father died ten years ago, leaving me rich and with many fields and servants. I grieved much for my father; and then there came a time in my life when people said that I was crazed. For hours and sometimes days I would lie unconscious to all about me. But at those times my soul was far away, and I was seeing stranger things than have ever before been seen by a woman. I found I could travel to the ends of the world, could see the secrets hidden within the breast of the earth and under the waters of the ocean, and could know things that it was not given to others to know. I have mem-

ory of other lives that I have lived, and also visions of lives yet to come. Of these things the world knows but little. In India and Thibet are many men, although but few women, who have the powers and knowledge that have been given to me. Scientists are groping for some of the truths that I know without learning. They talk and write of the nous, of the subjective mind and subjective soul, of the astral body and soul memory; but to me all these things are as open books, and parts of myself and of my life. I am commanded to live out my life in this valley. To the simple people here I am as a guide and protector, and it is decreed that they shall worship me and obey me. There are a few other such as I. Have you not heard of Santa Teresa, of Sonora? I am happy here in this beautiful valley, and my people are happy. Every night, for two hours after midnight, I lie on that couch; and my soul goes away, and learns of all the knowledge that is known in the world. And at all times I can close my eyes and learn what is good for my people. I cannot tell you of the joy I obtain from these experiences. It is a joy greater than any happiness known to mortals. I lie back in my chair and close my eyes, and at once the atmospheric waves begin to disclose themselves in the direction of my wish. First the shimmering

waves are red, then purple, then blue; and, as they change in color, they extend in length, until soon I can see to the end of the world. I can look across the ocean, under the mountains, down into the very centre of the earth; and all the time my body is here, rigid and cold in the soul sleep. At other times I can leave my body, and go like a bird across space. I rise upon the waves of the atmosphere, which at such times are tangible and visible things to me. I look down upon the face of the earth, and see lights shining from the windows of houses, smoke ascending from chimneys, and the tall trees raising their tops toward the moon. I meet other soul people; and we talk of the destiny of mankind, the secrets of happiness, of the infinity of the future.

“But my physical body always is here. Once each day I walk forth with my duenna and my guards, and once each day I sit in the chair before the grated door and give advice and tell of my visions to my people. I have but one sorrow. As I learn new things, I forget many that are old. Many friends that were known to me in other lives are now forgotten, and I feel always that I may forget the faces of even those who are with me through all the days of my life. I have known that you were to come to me,—you who knew me and loved me in other lives

long centuries ago. This has brought me the greatest happiness I shall ever know, yet this happiness is tinged with sorrow; for I am haunted by the fear that the memory of you may go from my mind, and that I may not remember you again while I live. But just now I will not think of that, and will enjoy my happiness while I may. Now give me your hand; and I will prove to you that I am sane, and that there is nothing hidden from me."

She took his hand in her soft grasp, and read to him all the details of his past life as though it had been written in a book which lay open before her gaze. She told of the time and place of his birth, of little occurrences of his childhood which had long been forgotten by him, of the struggles of his youth and the successes that had crowned his manhood. She told him of all the secret longings of his heart, and of the hidden motives that ruled his life. When she had finished, he had not one secret that she did not know, not one aspiration that she had not divined, not one hope that was hidden from her. Then she placed her soft arms about his neck, imprinted upon his lips a kiss, the memory of which will remain with him until his dying day, and told him that she loved him.

All restraint had gone from the man, all sense of the strangeness of the situation, all memory of the

past, and all thought of the future. He was in love. The woman of his choice, the bright, glorious woman of his dreams, was in his arms; and he pressed kisses upon her lips, he talked to her of his happiness, and he knew more joy in one short hour than had ever been known to him in all the long years of his life that had gone before.

The evening passed like a dream. They walked in the cool shade of the patio. They talked of many things a little, and a great deal of one thing. They wandered about, hand in hand, like two children. They looked into each other's eyes and smiled, and they sang for the sheer joy of living and loving. When the sun began to sink behind the mountains in the west and send long shadows across the mesas to envelop the great *casa*, they went within doors and dined together, sitting facing each other at a little table, and paying no heed to the silent servants who waited upon them. Then she played upon a harp, and sang to him,—played the sweetest, wildest, weirdest, most entrancing melodies that he had ever heard, and yet which seemed strangely familiar to him. They talked of the future, of the days and months and years that they should know each other and love each other upon the earth, and of the love for each other that they should know in other worlds,

æons of ages in the future, when their short spans of life should be but half-forgotten fractions of time compared to the eternity of their love.

A little before midnight a maid came; and the girl went with her to another room, soon returning clad only in a loose white robe. With the lover and her maid she went to the white room; and, after imprinting another kiss upon her lover's lips, she lay down upon the bier-like couch, and was instantly asleep. The old duenna silently entered the room, sat down by the couch, and gazed intently at her mistress. The man stood in awe for a time, and then ventured to approach the couch and touch the brow of his sweetheart. Her brow was as cold as ice, and felt as feels the flesh of the dead. He took her hand in his. It was rigid, and seemed to be bloodless. He grew afraid, and asked the duenna, in a trembling voice, if there was not danger. The woman only shook her head, and made no reply. Thus the man passed two miserable hours. He stood most of the time gazing upon the white, rigid face of the woman who was dearer than life to him, and whose smile he valued more than all else he had gained in the world. He walked at intervals in the silent patio, and gazed up at the stars, wondering sometimes if he were awake and sane, or asleep and demented.

At two o'clock a little marble clock chimed out the hour; and the girl opened her eyes, sat up, looked around in a dazed way for a moment, and then smiled as her gaze fell upon the man.

"Help me," she said, holding out her hand to him.

He assisted her from the couch, led her to her own room, and took her in his arms and kissed her as a mother might kiss a loved babe who had come back to her from the grave. He told her of his fear while she was in the strange sleep. He said wild things to her about what he should do if he ever really lost her; and then he clasped her to him, and asked her to be his bride.

"Your bride?" she said, with a radiant smile. "Why, I am your bride! In the long, long ago, in the dim time that saw the beginning of things, you took me to your heart as your bride. I have been your bride in many lives since then, and will be in many future lives. No words of mummary need be said over us by any canting priests to join our souls together, for we are affinities. I am your bride: you are my bridegroom; and the present, the priceless Now is ours. Let us forget all else."

They forgot time and sorrow and the world; they forgot death and life, and the past and the future;

they forgot hope, for all their hopes were realized; they forgot joy, for it was incarnate within them. Their love was perfect in its fulness, yet as pure as the love of a mother for her babe. And in a space of time that was as short as a breath and as long as eternity, the morning came, and the rays of the sun came out of the east and lightened up the windows of the house that to the man seemed like a palace of the blessed.

“You must go from me now for a time,” said the girl. “Your horses are in harness, and your servant awaits you at my gate. You must journey again to your own city, and there arrange so you can come to me again, and be prepared to abide with me forever. You have duties to others, and must go. I shall rejoice all the time you are gone, for I know you will come again. And now farewell.”

The man grieved because his duty compelled him to go to his own people and attend to affairs that required attention; and, as he rode in the buckboard over the mesas and plains, and then in the cars over the deserts and mountains and forests and fields, he thought unceasingly of the woman who was called Santa Beatriz. He remembered, in a disjointed way, the tale she had told him of her visions, of her power over the poor people who dwelt in the valley that was

her home, of her sayings of past lives and lives to come. It did not seem strange to him that she was not to become known to the world; for it would be sacrilege for the gaping crowds to know of this fair woman who dwelt in seclusion in a sequestered valley, and was almost a goddess.

So soon as his affairs were adjusted, he hastened back to Mexico. He left the railroads and the busy throngs of men, and set out again for the peaceful valley that was to be his home until the day of his death, and where his radiant bride awaited him with kisses and caresses. He reached Casa Beatriz at the same hour as before. Again he saw the great silent house, the green fields, the long rows of corrals. Once more he observed that no living being was near the house. Soon he saw the ponderous gates open as they had done before, the two tall Mexicans took their stands, and again came the black-clad man with the wooden staff. His heart was in his mouth, and the seconds seemed like hours while he waited for the old duenna and his sweetheart with her beauty that was like unto the beauty of a morning on the sea.

Then she came, clad as before in clinging silk, her raven hair in sweet disarray over her fair brow, her white teeth showing as she gazed upon the ground and smiled. The man could scarcely control his emotion.

He sprang from the wagon, rushed to her, and clasped her in his arms.

The girl recoiled from him in surprise, but gave no sign of either recognition or fear.

“Why, Beatriz! Why do you act so strangely? Are you not glad to see me again after we have been apart so long?” said the man.

“I do not know you, sir. Why should I be glad to see you more than any other stranger? What do you desire of me?” replied Beatriz, with great dignity.

“What does this mean?” asked the man, turning to the duenna. “Has anything occurred to mar the memory of Beatriz? Has she been ill? If something had not befallen her, she would have been overjoyed at my return. Tell me, what is wrong?”

“Santa Beatriz is well, as she always is,” replied the duenna. “Her mind is as clear as ever, her life goes on in the same way. But, Señor, I must tell you one thing that has befallen, which will make you very sad. It is this: Santa Beatriz has utterly forgotten you. The recollection of you has gone from her mind entirely, and you will be in her memory no more forever.”

“What strange things do you talk of, duenna?” asked Beatriz, turning to the old woman. “You speak of my memory for this stranger. Why, I have

no memory of him; for I have never seen him before. Yet stay: there is something about his face—a look in his eyes—that does seem strangely familiar to me.”

She looked at him carefully, he thought even wistfully. Then she turned away, and said:—

“No, it must have been fancy or some shred of a dream that has clung in my brain. I thought for an instant I had known this man, but I am sure I have never looked upon his face before.”

The duenna seemed to pity the stranger, and invited him to take up his abode in the house until he, too, should be perfectly sure that the beautiful girl had utterly forgotten him.

He remained in the house for many days. He narrowly observed every look, word, and action of Santa Beatriz whenever she came near him or was in sight of him. She seemed to know her surroundings perfectly, to remember every room, piece of furniture, plant, and book; but each time she saw him afresh it was as though she had never seen him before. He could elicit no word of recognition from her; and he decided to go away, as the situation was almost driving him mad. When his conveyance was awaiting him in the road, and he was ready to depart, he saw Beatriz and her duenna walking in the patio. He

spoke to the duenna, and she left her mistress and went to the gate to talk to him.

“I am going away now,” he said, “for to remain here is worse than torture. I need not explain to you; for you know what she was to me, and of the love I shall always bear her. But, before I go, tell me, if you can, why it is that memory of me is gone from her, and why it is that she does not know me, when she seems sane and well, and knows all other things.”

“It is a strange thing, and I can only conjecture the reason for it,” answered the duenna. “Santa Beatriz told you something of her life, so you know that she is as one set apart in the cause of good. She is controlled by unknown powers, and it seems decreed that she must live out her life in this little valley, devoted to the people who dwell here; and it also seems decreed that she must not bear love in her bosom for any living man. When you came here first, she knew you, and she told me that in other lives than this you had been her lover. I think that may be true, for until you came she never spoke a word of love to any man. Within an hour from the time you went away, she came to me and told me she feared she was fated to forget that you had been with her, and even forget that she had met you in this life.

I believe that those who guide and rule her life do not desire that she know and love you, and I think it is they who have effaced the memory of you from her brain. I know not why, unless it is that her love for you would mar the work she was born into this life to do. In other lives she may know and remember and love you, as I am sure she has done in past lives. And that is all the hope I can see for you.”

The duenna joined her mistress, and the two women resumed their walk up and down the grassy patio. As they walked, a humming-bird lit upon the finger of Santa Beatriz ; and, as the stranger looked upon her for the last time, she was talking to the bird and smiling like a child with a new toy, or like a poet admiring the fresh beauty of a lily.

The traveller lives and works and hopes and fears, much as do other men, except that he remembers that he saw and loved and dwelt with the World's Desire in his waking hours instead of only in his dreams.

The Tale of Burnt-foot Maiden

TRUE is the saying that "coming events cast their shadows before," and it is also true that past events greatly influence the occurrences of times long after. That an Indian maiden's life was blighted, and the love of her heart was turned to bitter jealousy, was due to the fact that in years long past, before the white men had settled the plains and valleys of Colorado, a fierce battle between the Ute and Comanche peoples took place on the great plains north of where now stands the little town of La Junta. And even the result of that battle hinged upon another older event.

Long ago an Apache man, while hunting along the little streams that flow into the San Juan River, met with a band of Utes, and became enamoured of a comely Ute maiden who was with the party. So strong was his liking for her that he abandoned his clan and tribe, took the woman to wife, and lived with the Utes as a member of that nation. A son was born of the union; and the mixture of blood, as is the case of nations as well as individuals, was for good. The son combined the cunning of the Apaches with the sturdy bravery of the Utes, and his intelli-

gence was greater than that of men of either of his parent tribes. In time his Apache father returned to his own land and his own people, as old men are prone to do in their declining years; but the son grew up a Ute. When the battle with the Comanches occurred, this young half-breed Ute was but a warrior; but, as his band was being cut down by the warriors of the opposing tribe, he rose in his stirrups, made a fiery speech to his comrades, rode headlong into the midst of the Comanches, and plucked victory from the rout that had been started. And then his grateful fellows, forgetting that he was half-alien and of common birth on his mother's side, made him their chief. And thus it was that Mah-kotch-ah-wuh became the chief of the Moache Utes, and his bravery in other battles caused the allied Ute tribes to elect him the war chief of the nation.

Mah-kotch-ah-wuh took wives, as a great chief and medicine man should do. He selected a wife from his own tribe, he captured another from the Kiowas, and in time a third was given him by a friend of his who had fought by his side in many a hard battle with the surrounding peoples. Children were born to him, the eldest being named Mean. And, as the whites came and filled the land, and their forts grew up on every side, and the strong arm of the law lay over the

face of the country of the Utes, the ambition of Mah-kotch-ah-wuh became centred in his son. Mean was not much like his father. The old chief was dignified and self-assertive and sometimes strident; while his son was quiet and retiring, and talked but little. But under his quiet demeanor there beat the blood of two red nations, and he was Indian to the core. His father had him instructed in the magic of the tribe, and did all he could to educate him to take his place as chief when the days of the father were no more. And when he was eighteen years old, and the great Bear Dance was being given, Mean took Kahnnoon-i-patch (Burnt-foot Maiden) to wife.

Many of the Ute women are handsome when they are young; but in all the allied tribes of Moaches, Capotas, and Weeminuchees, there was no woman so comely as the bride of Mean. Her black eyes were large and soft; and, when they gazed upon her husband in melting tenderness, he thought that no other woman in all the world had eyes of such lustre and beauty. Her form was perfectly modelled, and in her picturesque garments she looked like a woodland Diana. And she loved her husband so much that she had no thought and no care for anything in the world but him. She went with him from the *cannee* to his horse whenever he rode away, she met him far up the

trail on his return from any expedition, and she studied and worked and planned to make his home comfortable and his life pleasant. And she was so happy that she sang soft Ute songs all day as she went about her work, and she smiled and caressed her lover all the time he was at home.

Then Mean's father came to him and told him that it would be good for him to go to the great schools of the white-faced people, and learn the wisdom they had in their books, and gain knowledge of the ways of that dominant race. Kah-noon-i-patch was grieved that Mean should go from her; but, as it was for his own advancement, and in order that he might become even wiser than nature had made him, she was reconciled. And no tenderer farewell was ever spoken than that of the young Ute bride to her husband as he departed for the wide lands of the East.

In six months Mean returned from the school, and not long after, his wife became the mother of a girl baby.

"We will name the baby Purple Morning," said the father, looking from the tent to the east, and thinking, according to Ute custom, to name the new-born child after the first thing his eyes rested upon.

"Let us name her Mary," answered the wife.
"While you were away at the great school a Bible

man came here; and he told me a wondrous tale of a mother whose name was Mary, and she was the fairest and dearest and truest woman that ever lived. She was a white-skinned woman; but the tale the man told of her made me think that she was as true and as loving as I am to you, and as I hope our babe will be to her husband when she is a woman and has taken up the life of a woman.”

So the little red mite was named Mary; and, as the soft baby lips found her breast, and her husband held her hand and smiled down into her eyes, the cup of Kah-noon-i-patch's happiness was full to overflowing. Mean had returned to his people clad in a blue school uniform and with short hair, and much murmuring against these innovations was heard amongst the men of his tribe. But his father, the chief, explained that the young man was only following the imperative rules of the school, and that the changes were not permanent. It was not long until Mean went to the school again; and his wife dwelt alone in a tent next her mother's, and passed the long hours caring for her little babe and longing for the return of her husband. Ute social laws are lax, and many men of the tribe essayed to make love to Kah-noon-i-patch; but she repulsed them so fiercely that soon she was allowed to pass her time unmolested. And then

Mean again returned to his people; and to his wife the sky was as fair as the skies of the Happy Hunting Grounds, the days were like sweet dreams of bliss, and the nights were full of joy that was too deep for expression. Love and the world were young and fair; and in no palace in the world dwelt a happier wife and mother and lover than was this red woman of the Utes, who dwelt in a tent in the wild land of a savage tribe.

“For your sake, my husband, I am sorry that our child is not a son; for, if the little Mary had but been a boy, then could you rejoice in the knowledge that your son, after you, would be a chief. Yet, for myself, I rejoice that she is a daughter, and thus will be longer at my breast, and nearer to me for more years, than though she had been a son. And in good time the great Sch-now-wuff will bless us with a male child, and then will you love me even more than you do now. Is it not so, dear one?” And the Ute mother leaned her cheek against the cheek of her husband.

Mean rejoiced in his wife. Her suppleness, and the strength of her rounded limbs, and the grace of her motion, and the brightness of her eyes, were all dear in his sight. He tarried much with his wife, holding aloof from the council meetings, medicine-

making, and monte playing of the men of his tribe. And in time he went again to the Indian school.

At the school the young Indian found much to think about. He noticed that it took long, weary hours for him to learn simple things from the books that his masters seemed to comprehend without study. He observed that, while he was well treated, he was looked down upon as an inferior,—that he, a man, was petted, cajoled, coaxed, and driven like a child. The Indian blood in his veins ran faster because of these things; and the black savagery of his nature arose within him, and he came to hate the school and its white-faced teachers. So one day he announced that he was going to return to the reservation, and at once. Argument was of no avail; and, as it was deemed best not to anger the son of a powerful chief and thus place difficulties in the way of securing other Ute children and youths for the school, he was allowed to go.

Again he put in an appearance at the agency in a blue uniform, a gray hat, and with shorn locks. And, when it was said that he had returned to stay, the old men complained of the folly taught to young Indians at school, and taunted Mean for adopting the ways of the whites. As he sat at a meeting of the medicine men, of whom by selection and initiation he was one, an old medicine priest said:—

“Mean, it should be that now you should decide whether you will be fully a Ute or partly a white man. It is not good that you appear among us with shorn hair, for the bravery of men is largely in their hair. And the clothes that were worn by the forefathers of our people should be good enough for you. You are the son of a chief, and are a medicine man by your own right; and, if you do not desire to disgrace yourself and your people, you should again return to the ways of your tribe. How will you decide?”

The lectures given by the teachers of the school came to the Indian boy's memory. He remembered the life that had been pictured to him as the “new dispensation” for the Indians,—a quiet, dull life, spent tilling the soil for six days of the week, sleeping the sleep of exhaustion at night, and on Sunday going to a stuffy church to listen to the droning of some dull man who pretended to interpret the Law of Laws in all correctness. The lectures had not pictured the new life in quite that way, but it was thus that it seemed to Mean. And then he thought of the life of his own people,—of the wild riding, the glad hunting, the sacredness and mystery of the medicine-making, the dancing that caused one's blood to flow fiercely through his veins. And he arose in his place and stripped his “citizen's clothes” from his back,

he smeared his face with paint, he donned the gee-string and blankets of his people, and he became the wildest and most frenzied of all the frenzied men who took part in the weird medicine-making.

The next day his father, the chief, took him to a lonely place in the woods, and talked to him long and earnestly. The old man asked his son of the vaunted knowledge that came from studying the books and the ways of the white men; and he seemed rather pleased to hear his son say that it was all folly, and the work of fools, and not fit for men to know or do.

“Then, my son,” said the old man, “there is much for you to hope for from our people. The men of my tribe are all my friends, and they all hope that one of my sons shall be chief in my stead when I am gone. Your brother will never be chief. But if you think the ways of our people are better than the ways of the white people, and if you will strive and be diligent in the study of magic, you shall be first a *pwu-au-gut*, and later a chief; for old Mape-ah-sas says he will choose you as initiate to succeed as head medicine-maker, if you will be in all things a Ute; and I will select you to succeed me as chief. But be a Ute in all things. Attend all the dances and makings of medicine, fast with Mape-ah-sas, learn to gamble with adroitness, take to yourself another wife, and

secure many horses. Win in the races of the riders, win in the game of kan-yute, be first and best if any fighting is to be done, and be eloquent in the councils.’’

“But another wife, my father? I am well pleased with the maid, Kah-noon-i-patch, and I love her; and I fear she would be very sad if I brought another wife to my *cannee*.’’

“Foolish speech, my son,’’ grunted the old man. “You speak like a woman or a child. Kah-noon-i-patch is a good maiden, and a comely one; but, like all women, she is selfish and jealous, and will be angry and will grieve for a time when you bring another wife to your home. But shall you be as these fools of white men, and have but one wife all the days of your life? Why, a man who has not many wives and multitudes of horses is no better than a fool of a Pueblo Indian, who knows no more than to mould pottery and grow little fields of maize, and pay his few pieces of money to a priest. When I was young, I sought out the lands of distant tribes to steal their horses and make captives of their women; and those were the days of my life the memory of which make bearable these dull days when our lands have been taken by the whites and we are penned up here on this narrow reservation like so many rabbits in the

trap of a Navajo boy. Be a man, Mean. Be my son, and a true son of the two bloods that flow in your veins, and get wives and many horses.”

The annual Bear Dance of the Utes is the time when marriages are arranged more often than at other times. As the Indians dance away the days to assist the bears to recover from hibernation, and then to help them to find mates, so their minds run upon finding mates for themselves; and men who seek new wives, and youths who seek their first marital partners, dance with great zest and zeal, as do almost all the women. Mean attended the dance that occurred soon after his father’s conversation; but, as he feared the reproaches that he felt would be in the soft eyes of his wife, he asked her not to participate in the ceremonies. And one evening, as the great, yellow, molten sun of the San Juan was sinking behind the towering crests of the La Platas, he led to his home in the valley of the Rio de los Pinos a young girl whom he had chosen as his second wife. She was a meek, awkward, rather ungainly creature; and she was very proud that she had been chosen as the wife of a medicine man who would some day be chief.

It is believed by the Utes that from time immemorial—since the time that Seh-now-wuff, the Great Spirit, dwelt upon the earth—it has been

proper and right for men to have a plurality of wives; and the second wife of Mean saw nothing wrong, or even unusual, in her marriage to a man who already had a wife. She expected, of course, that her husband would build for her a new tent, or *cannee*, as the Utes name it, next to the one in which Kah-noon-i-patch would live; and she looked forward with pleasure to enjoying the company of the first wife when their joint husband should be away on hunts or attending medicine-makings. Yet she shyly held back as Mean opened the flap of his tent and spoke to Kah-noon-i-patch.

“Kah-noon-i-patch, come and give welcome to your sister,” he said, averting his eyes from her face when he saw the happy smile with which she looked up from where she knelt at her cooking to greet him.

A frightened look came into her eyes at once, and she hastily rose to her feet.

“What is this talk of my sister?” she said.

“This is my new wife, and she shall be a sister to you. She has promised to love you, and to render you the obedience that belongs to the first wife of a household,” Mean replied, shifting uneasily on his feet.

Kah-noon-i-patch had been a dutiful daughter to her parents, she had been a true wife to her husband,

and throughout all her life she had not seemed like a barbarian. Yet her blood was pure Ute blood, which is to say that it was hot and vengeful and relentless, and could upon occasion be cruel and murderous. When she first heard the terrible words from her husband's lips, she stood like one stricken. Then she clutched at her heart and reeled, and the landscape seemed swimming before her eyes. She thought of the happy, happy days she had spent with her husband, of the happy years she had expected to live with him, rearing his children and devoting her life to his welfare and happiness. Then a wave of resentment arose in her savage blood. She forgot that she was a wife and a mother, and remembered only that she was a loving woman who had been causelessly wronged. Rage mastered her; and she grasped a sharp knife from among her few utensils, and murderously struck at her husband with it. He grasped the sharp blade in his hand, and was cut to the bone, but prevented it from striking his heart. The woman, with the strength of fury, drew the knife from his grasp, and struck at him again and again; and it required all his masculine strength to avert the blows and save his life. Finally, she dropped the knife, and struck him full in the face.

“Why do you not beat me, you animal?” she

cried. "It is lawful for a husband to beat his wife for cause, and I am giving you cause. But, if you so much as clench your hand to strike me, I will kill you. I may not have strength to kill you now, when you are warned and can defend yourself. But strike me but once, even make a motion to strike me, and sooner or later I will kill you."

The young Indian attempted to reason with his wife, and to point out that his own advancement in the tribe required that he should have two wives. He promised that she should always be the favorite; and he said that within a few weeks, after enough time had passed so that too much scandal would not be made, he would dismiss the new wife and dwell alone with Kah-noon-i-patch. Tears came to the eyes of the injured wife, for after all she was a woman. Then, like a wild beast, she flew at her husband, clutched his throat, and would have killed him with the strength engendered by sheer frenzy if the frightened new wife had not come to her bridegroom's assistance. Then Kah-noon-i-patch caught up her baby, and ran swiftly away into the forest.

She wandered in the forest for days, no one knowing where she slept at night. On the few occasions when any one met her, she at once hastily went away. And when Mean met her, and attempted to

persuade her to return to her home, she drew the knife she wore at her belt, and said she would kill him if he did not at once leave her.

A few women who dared not speak their minds were the only members of the tribe who sympathized with Kah-noon-i-patch. Nearly all the men, and the older of the women, said that she was foolish and very wicked to thus rebel against the law that had come down through countless generations. Some of the men even said that it was to be regretted that the sway of the white men prevented the old punishment for undutiful wives being inflicted upon her.

Many of the men then sought to win Kah-noon-i-patch; and proposals of marriage were made to her by many of the unmarried men, and even by some who had wives. And, when they were through talking and boasting of their own greatness, she would look at them with a peculiar flash in her eyes, her teeth would meet with a little click, and, when she began to fondle the knife at her belt, the particular swain who was pressing his suit with her would usually remember that he had another thing to do just then, and would hastily depart.

Then one day a new yellow tent was seen on the little mesa that lies to the east of the river; and, when curious men rode over to it to learn whose it was,

their eyes were attracted by a little mark upon the flap that announced that the tent was the home of a Magdalen. No eyes but an Indian's could have seen the mark, and none but Indians could have understood it. There was some wonder at the yellow tent and the secret sign; but much greater wonder when it was known that the occupant of the tent was Kah-noon-i-patch, the once gentle wife whom the "Bible man" had said was like a white woman,—the tender mother who had departed from the custom of her race in order that her babe might bear the name that stood for all the virtues.

That was years ago; but Kah-noon-i-patch still dwells in the yellow tent, and the secret sign is still upon the tent flap. The new wife of Mean died in childbirth; and the living infant, according to Ute law, was strapped to its dead mother's breast, wrapped in the same blanket that was her shroud, and buried with her,—the living and the dead together. The tale was told to Kah-noon-i-patch by nearly every gossip of the tribe, some of whom lowered their voices when they told how the little infant had been heard to feebly cry when the soft earth of the grave had been shovelled upon it; but all the time they talked, Kah-noon-i-patch stared straight ahead of her, like a carved image, and not even by the movement of a

muscle or an eyelash did she acknowledge that she heard those who were talking.

One day a trader sat in front of the yellow tent, holding his horse by a lariat which he kept in his hand. This man had given goods to Kah-noon-i-patch when she had no money; he had bought medicine for her little Mary, and thus saved her life, when she was sick and had been given up to die; he had done many other kind things to the red woman who was a wild Magdalen; and always he had treated her with as much respect as though she were still the honored wife of a chief's son. For all these things she liked this man; and, when he talked to her of Mean, she answered him.

She told him that she regretted the life she lived, but would not now change it; that the only fear she had was that she might some time again grow mad with fury and kill her former husband as he lay asleep at night or when he did not think she was near.

“Do you still hate him so, then?” asked the white man.

“Hate him!” the Indian woman repeated softly to herself. The hard, cold gleam left her black eyes, and they melted in a tender look. Her voice became low and soft and gentle, and she said: —

“You have been kind to me, and I must speak no

lies to you. Also, you belong to a people much wiser than ours; and it may be that you will understand me better than I understand myself. So I will confess to you that I love Mean — my husband, the bridegroom of my youth — more than I love myself, or life, or my hope of happiness in the other world. I love him! Do you know what that means? I love him, love him! I dream of him every night; I think of him every minute that I am awake; and my heart thrills whenever I see him or see anything belonging to him or hear his name spoken. But I shall never speak to him again: no, not even if he and I should live so long that we were the only two people left upon the earth. I would not raise my finger to save him from death, even if he were being killed by my worst enemy. I love my little girl, but I fear I should hate her if she even spoke to him. And the only reason I now care to live is that he may feel disgraced, every day and every hour, by the knowledge that I live the life I now do, and yet act in all ways as though he were not even alive.”

The woman’s head went forward between her hands, and she gazed with staring, unseeing eyes upon the ground. And the man rode slowly away, as much grieved over the tale of Kah-noon-i-patch as he might have been over some well-written tale in a book.

That is all of the story, except Mean's side of it. And, as it would perhaps only still further convince us that there are many things about the characters of Indians that are not understandable by people whose skins are white, it will be better to leave that unwritten.

Luz

THE Santa Cruz mine was far up on the side of one of the bare, bleak, burnt-looking mountains of the Sierra Madre. The shaft house, the mill, the store building, and the little house of the superintendent had once been neatly whitewashed; but the sun had stained them until they had become as dingy as the hovels of the natives. There were some straggling rows of adobe huts occupied by the Mexican miners, a few corrals, a little chapel, but rarely opened; and, besides these and the big piles of dump rock, there was only the sky, the sun, some vistas of barrenness, and some discouraged-looking cacti and evergreens. The mine belonged to an American company. Therefore, it worked all the time. The "chulk-chulk" of its big engines was never stilled, and at all times ore could be heard rattling over the screens. There were always some half-naked babies playing in the sand, some barefooted women slouching from one adobe hut to another, and some sandalled and seraped Mexicans leaning against walls. Sometimes, after pay-day, there would be a *baile* given in one of the low adobe houses; and sometimes there were fights in which men gashed and slashed each other with great knives. Aside from these things there was not much, and life was very dull in the mining camp of Santa Cruz.

To this outlandish place, far from railroad, telegraph, post-office, clubs, society, and civilization, went George Bayler, mining engineer and college graduate, to superintend the mines and manage the business of the mining company. There were various reasons for his going, one being that he was in love — he believed deathlessly — with a weak-faced woman, who had thrown him over to marry a richer man. Then he believed himself possessed of an inherent love for the solitude and loneliness of the deserts and mountains. And, also, the salary of the superintendent at Santa Cruz was about twice as much as he could have earned in the States, due to the fact that Santa Cruz was so desolate and God-forsaken that it was hard to induce competent men to go there to live. So, with a two years' contract in his pocket, and high hopes of a great success in his mind, Bayler went to Santa Cruz. It may be as well to say that the real name of the mine was not Santa Cruz, nor that of the man Bayler. This, so that some of the people who know the Sierra Madre may not fasten the story to the wrong man.

Bayler found that Santa Cruz was a sullen place, with sullen surroundings, and that the people were sullen among themselves, although they almost fell down and kissed the ground he walked upon, knowing

from past experience that favor with the superintendent meant the overlooking of shortcomings, many invitations to drink, and occasional presents of small sums of money. But for a few weeks the place, being so different from any he had known before, possessed a certain interest for him. Then there came a time when the novelty was worn off; and, after he had superintended the workings of the mine and mill and checked up his accounts, all that was left him to do was to read newspapers a week old, gaze upon the changeless sky, and curse Santa Cruz and its people. There was absolutely no congenial companionship for him in the place. The storekeeper was an Irishman, who dwelt with a dusky daughter of the soil, and liked Santa Cruz as well as he would have liked any other place in the world. The book-keeper was an American, who dwelt with, and as did, the Mexicans, drank vile mescal in frightful quantities, and was no more company for Bayler than though he had been deaf and dumb. Aside from these there were only the ignorant Mexicans of the *peon* class and some dirty Indians who occasionally came to the camp. And when things with Bayler were at their worst, and he was seriously considering an easy way of suicide, Manuel Zepada, the head ore-sorter, remarked to him that his step-daughter, Luz, was as beautiful

as the picture of a saint; and he asked Bayler why he dwelt in loneliness when the camp was full of women who had no husbands.

Bayler swore at him; and Zepada skulked away, his hat in his hand.

But one hot afternoon the girl Luz went to Bayler's house, where he was sitting, moodily wondering why he had ever consented to immure himself in such an outlandish and unlovely place.

"Señor Superintendent, I am Luz, the step-daughter of Zepada, the ore-sorter," said the girl, standing shyly before Bayler.

"Um!" said Bayler, scarcely looking at her.

"I am sixteen years old, and I have never had a lover," artlessly announced the dusky maid.

This was an odd statement, and it rather interested Bayler. So he looked hard at the girl, and said, "Well?"

"José Aguilar seeks to take me for his wife," continued the girl, nervously fingering the edge of her tattered *reboso*; "but my mother says that, while I am young and pretty, I should have more joy in my life than I would have with José. She says that I am very pretty, and that it might be that you would like me."

"The devil!" said Bayler. "What are you driving at?"

“I am sixteen years old, and I have never had a lover,” repeated the girl, drawing nearer to the man. “I am more beautiful than any other girl in Santa Cruz or for many miles from Santa Cruz. I know not how beautiful are the white women who dwell in the land that is your home, but here I am the most beautiful. And my mother, and Zepada, her husband, have talked to me; and they have said that it might please you if I came here to dwell with you,—to cook for you and keep your house, and to soothe you to rest after the toil of the day. Would that please you, Señor?”

Bayler comprehended the proposition the girl was trying to make, and curtly ordered her to return to her own home and put such thoughts out of her head. And, with a gentle *buenas tardes*, she went away.

Then Bayler’s thoughts went rushing back to the woman he had loved and lost, and again he pondered upon methods of suicide. The next morning, after the work in the mine was well under way, he walked past the *jacal* of the Zepadas; and Luz gave him a bright smile from the doorway.

In the afternoon Luz went again to Bayler’s house, and this time he asked her to be seated. She looked smilingly full into his face, and asked,—

“Has the Señor thought more of the matter of which I spoke on yesterday?”

“Look here, girl, what is it you have in your head? Are you asking me to marry you?”

“No, Señor, no,” answered the girl, smilingly. “Zepada, my step-father, says that the Americans will not wed with the women of our kind; but he says often they take them to dwell with as companions. I seek only to dwell with you in this house, to work for you, to nurse you if you are sick, and to make the time happier for you than it now is.”

Then the Anglo-Saxon moral principles of Bayler came to the surface.

“Why, girl,” he said, “you do not know what you propose! You are little more than a child; and I hear no evil reports about you among the chattering men of the place, so it must be that you do not realize what you say.”

“You hear no evil of me because I do no evil. And, if you will take me to dwell with you, I will be so happy that as long as I live I will remember the time spent with you as the best time of my life. See! Am I not comely? My hands are soft, and my arms are round, and my eyes are bright, and my hair is not so coarse as the hair of the other women, although it is longer. And I am clean, and my garments are clean; and I can cook as well as though I were a grandmother. Do you not think you would be hap-

pier and more free from loneliness if I dwelt here with you?"

After all, the girl's proposition was rather complimentary to Bayler's sense of vanity; and he did not chide her. He told her she was mistaken in her ideas, he counselled her to dwell with no man but her wedded husband, and he strove earnestly to point out to her the evil of the course she contemplated. Then, as he felt sorry for her, he gave her a present of ten dollars, and sent her away.

Luz took the ten dollars; and, after she was out of sight of Bayler's door, she pressed the money to her bosom, and ran swiftly to her own home. The next morning she stole away at daybreak, and walked to the nearest Mexican town of any size,—a full day's journey away. And there she trafficked for bright clothes and scarlet beads and some ribbons, and various articles of attire. When she returned home, she fashioned her cloth into garments; and on the morning of the fourth day after Bayler had given her the money, she again appeared before him, walking gingerly in new shoes, and resplendent in a bright-colored dress.

"See!" she said to him, with a smile that showed all her white teeth. "Do not fine garments make fine ladies? Am I not now more beautiful than when I came to you in the old clothes that were all I possessed

before you gave me the great sum of money? See my shoes! Are they not like those worn by the great white Señoras of your own land? And is not this *reboso* as beautiful as any you have ever seen? Am I not now fair enough in your eyes to cause you to allow me to dwell here with you?"

The girl was as supple and well-formed as a young animal. Her black eyes sparkled as she spoke, her red lips parted in eagerness, her lissome form swayed toward Bayler; and she was a temptation to the lonely man who hated Santa Cruz, and believed that life was not worth living.

"Do your parents know of this mad notion of yours?" he asked.

"I have no parent but my mother, as my father is dead," she replied. "Zepada, who is now married to my mother, says it would be the best of good fortune if you will take me. And my mother, even now, is praying that you will look upon me with favor; for my mother loves me, and desires that life should go well with me."

"You certainly know I could never marry you, do you not?" asked the man.

"To a certainty, Señor. I do not even hope that you will marry me. It is only to dwell with you,—that is all I desire. And I will be very good. I

will never drink of the mescal, nor of the aguardiente, and I will be as faithful to you as though I were your dog."

"But I shall dwell in Santa Cruz but for a few months; and then I shall go away, and never return again. And, of course, I shall have to leave you here; for I could not take you among my own people."

"It is well, Señor. I understand fully. I seek but to be with you while you dwell in Santa Cruz; and, when you are gone again to your own people, I know that I shall never see you again."

"But your life would then be ruined. After dwelling with me, no man would marry you; and the remaining years of your life would not be worth living," said Bayler.

"Ah, the Señor does not understand," said the girl. "Among your people it may be different, but here at Santa Cruz I should be thought no less of after you were gone."

"But, when I go away, never to return, then what would you do?"

"*Quien sabe*, Señor? At first I would go again to dwell with my mother. But there are many men at Santa Cruz, and I think soon one of them would take me to dwell with him. For I am now a woman, and am old enough to dwell away from my mother."

Bayler argued and objected. He was striving to justify himself to himself, so that, when in after years his conscience might smite him, he might say to himself that he had done all that a man could do to show the woman the error of her way. And, finally, he said:—

“I will not do this thing. I should be doing you a great wrong, and I will not.”

“A wrong?” replied the girl. “Why, Señor, you would be granting me the greatest happiness I shall ever know. My life now is a poor life, and I have never known anything better. Zapada spends much of his wage for strong drink, and often we have not enough food in our house to satisfy our hunger. My clothes are always of the poorest; and, when I get a new garment, I know not how long it will be until I can hope to get another. I have no money, and often I am cursed and badly used. With you I should have good food, and I should never know hunger. I should have the finest of garments,—like these adorable ones I bought with your blessed money. I should not have hard work, and I would have much time to comfort you and bring smiles to your sad face. Señor, friend, take me. I will do you no harm; and, if you will take me, you will make me happier than I shall ever be in any other way. And I have learned

to love you, friend of mine. Your white skin and your fair hair are very dear in my eyes, and our sainted Lady of Guadalupe could grant me no greater joy then that of loving you and being loved by you."

"But, if you learned to love me, would it not be all the worse for you after I am gone? Would it not be better for you to put all thoughts of me out of your life now, before it is too late?"

"Ah, dear friend, if you do not take me, I shall be always miserable. But, if you allow me to come here, I shall have one year or two years of joy; and all the after years will be happier because of the memory of the time I dwelt with you and loved you. Take me, Señor. I love you, and I can bring you happiness. Look upon me! I am young. I am beautiful. My kisses shall soothe you when you are unhappy, and my presence shall keep loneliness from you."

She crept to his side, impulsively put her arms about his neck, and kissed him with all the fervor known to her half-wild blood. And the man was tempted by the woman, and he fell.

For eighteen months Bayler dwelt in barbaric bliss. He learned to love the brown-skinned Luz, and she was as devoted to him as though he had been a being to be worshipped. And then the term of his engage-

ment to the mining company came to an end. He refused another contract at a higher salary, and one day he told Luz that the time had come for him to return to his own country.

A look like that which hunters see in the eyes of wounded deer came into the dark eyes of the Mexican girl. She clutched at her side, her breath came hard, and she almost swooned.

“Will not the great company keep you here in charge of the mine if you will stay?” she asked.

“I could stay, for it is difficult to get men to come here, and the company would give me greater pay if I would remain; but I will not stay. I am yet young, my life is before me, and I must not waste my years in these barren mountains. I must go. It is sad to leave you, little sweet one; but you know we talked of all that in the beginning.”

“You must not, must not go,” said the girl, clasping him about the neck. “I should die if you were to go and leave me here.”

“I must go, Luz,” answered the man. “I owe it to myself and to my friends not to live here longer.”

“Then will you take me with you? You can keep me in hiding. None of your people need ever see me or know that I exist. All that I ask is that you will come to me sometimes, and will love me as you love me now.”

“It cannot be, little girl. Our life together must now come to an end. And you know we talked it all over in the beginning.”

“In the beginning it was different,” said the girl, almost fiercely. “In the beginning I sought only the shelter of your house, the food of your table, the garments and comforts your money would buy. But now I love you! You are dearer to me than my faith, than my life, than my hope for Paradise! You must not go! You shall not go! If you strive to leave me, I will stab myself in the heart, and fall dead at your feet; and the memory of my death and its cause shall haunt you through every day and every hour of your life. You must not go from me, for I cannot live without you.”

The girl’s words ended in a piteous wail, and the man was sorely disturbed. He felt like a murderer, yet he knew that he must abide by his determination.

“There is no other way, sweetheart,” he said. “I love you, and you know I love you; and it will be hard for me, too. But we are of different races and of different blood, and we must from now on live apart. There is no other way.”

The girl stared silently at him for a moment, her dark eyes dilating and her lips compressing rigidly. Then she said: —

“You will wed some cold white woman, some woman whose blood is as water, and who knows not the meaning of love. Away from me, after having known my love, you will be miserable. Come, dear heart of my heart, promise you will remain with me.”

She twined her arms about the man, pressed her wet cheek to his, and looked appealingly into his face. But he shook her from him, rose to his feet, and said: —

“It must be as I have said, Luz. There is no other way.”

The girl glared at him for a moment like a maniac. She rose to her feet with a spring that was as swift as that of a panther. She got between him and the door, drew a stiletto from her belt, and stood over him like a fury.

“There is another way,” she hissed. “I belong to you, and you belong to me. I am yours, body and soul, present and future; and you are also mine. You have made me love you as woman never loved a man; you have made me worship you as though you were a saint; you have made every drop of my life’s blood yearn for you, every thought of my brain turn to you, every hope of my life cling to you. And now you shall not leave me. If you will abide here with me, all shall be well, and never again, in all my

life, will I turn upon you. Or, if you will go and take me with you, I will dwell in solitude and poverty as your slave, if you will but see me sometimes, when I can no longer bear to be away from you. But if you do not say you will not go and leave me here, utterly alone, this day shall be the last that you and I shall live. This knife shall pierce your heart, and, when you have died in my arms, with my kisses upon your lips, then will I also kill myself and lie dead by your side. Speak quickly! What will you do? I do not now control my own acts, and you must speak."

The man knew something of the fierceness of Mexican souls, and he realized that he was nearer to his death than he had ever been before. And all at once he came to know that life is very sweet, and that it is not good for a young man to be hurled into eternity with the quickness of a flash of lightning. His cheek blanched, for a moment he could not speak; and then he decided to deceive the girl, and to gain his point by craft.

"Would you kill me, sweetheart?" he asked in a shaky voice,—“me, who loves you better than I love anything else in all the world? I would not part from you, dear one. I could not part from you. I see and know how dear I am to you; and, love, you

are dearer to me than I will ever be to you. I was but trying your love for me. I would not go away and leave you."

The girl looked at him with fierce longing in her eyes. Slowly her stiletto dropped. Her face became tense; and the lines about her mouth were drawn, as though from much weeping.

"What will you do, then?" she asked. "Will you abide here with me?"

"No, sweet one, I will abide no longer at Santa Cruz. I will return to the land of my own people, and there prepare a home for you. And then I will return for you, and take you with me; and we shall dwell with each other forever. It will be much better for us there than here. We shall have a fine house, with soft carpets on the floor and fine curtains at the windows; and you shall always be dressed in such garments as were never even heard of in Santa Cruz. And I will love you all the days of my life."

"You will return for me? You will not deceive me?" asked the girl.

"I will return for you. I will not deceive you," replied the man.

"Then, my loved one, my life, forgive me for my anger. I love you so much, so much! I could not live without you, and I was crazed when I thought

of losing you. But never again shall you see me in anger. Kiss me, dear one, and say you forgive me."

The next day Bayler took his departure, riding a mule down the steep trail that led from the mountain-side to the valley below. There was a foot-path down the mountain also, and the way down this foot-trail was much nearer. It joined the other trail a couple of miles from the hamlet; and, when Bayler came to the place where the ways came together, he found Luz awaiting him, she having run down while he rode around the longer way.

"Why, Luz, why are you here? It is so sad to say farewell that we should have to say it but once," said the man.

Luz grasped the bridle, as though fearful that he would put spurs to his mule and ride away from her.

"When you were gone," she said, "all at once I knew what it means to be alone. It is terrible, loved one,—so terrible that I fear it will kill me. The sky seemed to hang just over the earth, the air seemed to close about me and suffocate me, the blood seemed to stop flowing in my veins, and it was as though the very world itself were dead. Dismount, dear one; for I would look into your eyes."

Bayler dismounted. The girl took his pale face in her hands, reverently, as though he had been a

sacred thing. And she peered into his eyes as though she were striving to read the inmost secrets of his soul.

“Your eyes look true,” she said. “I believe that you have told me the truth; and now I will believe that you will return to me, and take me with you as you have promised. Now farewell, my loved one. May the Virgin and the saints guard you!”

The man’s eyes were damp. He kissed the girl, strained her to his breast, remounted his mule, and slowly rode down the sandy trail. And all the time he felt that it would be but scant justice if a thunderbolt should drop out of heaven and shrivel him to death for the lie he had told to the woman who loved him better than she loved the welfare of her own soul; for he never intended to look into her face again as long as he lived.

Luz dwelt on in the little sun-baked adobe hamlet that lay by the Santa Cruz mine. Sometimes she sat for hours, silent and alone, leaning against the gray wall of her little house, and staring away over the valley with wide, unmoving, unseeing eyes. And, again, she drank mescal, and shouted and shrieked through the little street, and terrorized those whom she met. But no harm befell her; and the people were always kind to her, for they said that she was crazed.

An Indian's Revenge

SAN ANTONIO was the modernized name of the second son of Mah-kotch-ah-wuh, the chief of the Spotted Fawn people of the Ute nation, and one of the medicine men of his tribe. The chief had another and older son, who was a much greater source of pride to him than San Antonio; for the elder son took a wife when he was very young, and it was not long until he took another, which showed that he revered the ancient customs of his people. Also, he was deeply versed in the mysteries of po-o-kante, or magic, practised by the medicine men; and he had advanced until he was the initiate, who, upon the death of the head medicine man, would succeed to that high office. It had been the chief's ambition for one of his sons to succeed him as chief, and for the other to become head medicine man of the tribe; but, as San Antonio showed no ambition, the chief began striving and plotting so that his eldest son might hold both offices.

The chief knew that the ways of life for his people were changing; and he realized that it would not be many years until all the old-time freedom of the Indians would be known of only in tales and traditions, and that a new era, either for good or bad, was dawning for his people. So his eldest son, who was

initiate, and would in time be both priest and chief, was sent away to a government school to learn the language of the whites. Often, in talking to his son, the chief told him that he must learn all possible things from the whites; for they had become the rulers of the land, and they were so many in numbers that they never could be driven away. This chief grieved because he had been born too late to live out his life in the wild, free way that his fathers lived, and too soon for him to master the great knowledge of the white conquerors. When he was a youth in his tribe, there were no white men in his country, and his people roamed and hunted and fought over a vast region that they claimed as their own. Then the pale faces had come from over the Eastern plains in swarms, like locusts; and the lands of his tribe had been taken by the invaders, and his people had been penned upon a reservation that gradually grew smaller until a few square miles of land were all that was left to them. An agency had been established, and even a railroad had stretched its long steel miles across the lands that were left to the Indians.

In his youth the old man had been a great warrior; and in the few years that had elapsed between his birth and the coming of the whites he had made his name respected and feared, not alone in his own tribe,

but in all the tribes that occupied the surrounding countries. By sheer bravery he had risen among his people; and one time, when with a little band of buffalo hunters he and the chief of the tribe were hemmed in by a marauding band of Comanches, the old chief had surrendered his office to him, and begged him to strive to win the battle. The odds were fearful; yet the brave words and braver actions of Mah-kotch-ah-wuh so spurred the courage of his comrades that they defeated their foemen, who outnumbered them ten to one.

But all that had gone into the past; and Mah-kotch-ah-wuh was dwelling in a little board house, behind which were fields that were planted and tilled by himself and his wives. He could not become great as a war chief, so he studied magic. And, as with many disappointed white men, it had come to be that his chief hope was centred in his sons.

The elder son was a joy to his father's soul. There were no wars in which he might win distinction; but the vigilance of the white soldiers had once or twice been evaded, and raids made upon neighboring tribes. After one of these raids the tribesmen said that Mah-kotch-ah-wuh might name his own successor as chief, suggesting that he name his eldest son. And the chief was glad, and worked all the

harder to secure honor among his own people for his son.

San Antonio, who was several years younger, was a thorn in his father's side. He would not go away to the schools. He would not study po-o-kante. When the men went away on the great annual deer hunt, San Antonio stayed at home with the women and the old men, saying that he was not yet full grown, and would hunt when he became a man. Yet the boy was well treated in the tribe; for he was the son of a chief, and a chief who brooked no insults for himself or his family.

San Antonio grew until he was a large boy or a half-grown man, yet he played always with the smaller children. The agency had become firmly rooted, and some of its buildings were beginning to show age. A trader's store had been established; and many of the Indians had almost forgotten that once they rode, free hunters and warriors, over the wide confines of the land they claimed, and that no tribe was known that could conquer them. Now they lived chiefly upon rations doled out to the squaws by government agents, and they sat around under the trees by the trader's store and played monte instead of hunting and fighting across the plains and among the mountains.

One day a party of men were sitting around a blanket, playing Mexican monte for small sums of money and trinkets. An exciting play was being made, and the dealer was utterly absorbed in the game. As he was stooping forward, looking intently at the stakes before him, San Antonio crept up behind him, and pushed him forward on his face. The man arose in anger and threatened the boy, while the others guffawed and laughed as though it were a good joke. San Antonio, thinking he had done a bright thing, stole away to the little river that ran near, filled an old can with water, and, returning, he crept up behind the man he had pushed, and poured the muddy water down his neck. Enraged, the man arose, gave the boy chase, and caught him.

“Let me go! Let me go!” howled the boy. “I am a boy, and you are a man; and you are a coward to fight me!”

“I will let you go if you will promise to behave,” said the man.

“I will promise nothing, you dog!” howled the boy, viciously kicking the man. “You dare do nothing to me. My father is chief; and, if you hurt me, he will kill you. You are a fool and a coyote and a coward, and you dare not hurt me for fear of my father!”

"I fear not your father," said the man, who was becoming more and more enraged. "Unless he is a fool, he would not fight me for whipping one so bad as you. And, then, he dare not try to harm me. He once was chief, and we all had to bow to his command. But now the *T'a-ta* rules here, and he rules your father as much as he rules me. Your father now is but a headman, and we have no chiefs but the white people."

"You lie!" shouted the boy, biting the man's hand.

Sorely goaded, the man took his heavy cowhide quirt and soundly whipped the boy, who writhed and shrieked and cursed in his grasp. As soon as he was freed, San Antonio sped away down the valley, not saying to any one where he was going.

His father had gone that morning to visit an old Indian who was sick in his tent far down the valley; and San Antonio was running to meet him on his return, and tell him of the beating he had received, and of the insults his abuser had cast even upon the chief.

The chief rode up the valley, his head bent low in thought. He had been to visit old White-Eye, an old man who had been in his maturity when Mah-kotch-ah-wuh was a boy, and who had been one of the first to hail him as chief on that fateful day when

the little band of buffalo hunters had so valiantly defended themselves against the great war party.

“White-Eye will soon pass to the Happy Hunting Grounds in the sun,” mused the chief, half aloud. “The number of his days is almost told; and, before the stepping leaves of the winter are being blown across the valley, he will have joined Seh-now-wuff and our fathers in the land where there is no death. To see him sick in his tent reminds me that I, too, am growing old. I seem not to remember the dull years as they pass along, one after another, like white soldiers as they march. When I was young, ah! then were the days and the years both fast and slow. Every day I lived as much as I now live in a year, and yet the years were so full of joy that each seemed no longer than a day. And then the white-faced people came,—the great Merikotch race, before whom no people can stand. Those people must be the children of Yo-woy-witch, the Evil Spirit. They are not strong and hardy and enduring, like men, but are soft and ease-loving and luxurious, like babes. They shiver if the cold blows upon them. They must be served, like those who have broken limbs; they must be swaddled in warm clothing, like sucklings. Yet, with all their weaknesses and follies, they are far greater than even my own great people;

and, if we had not submitted to them, they would ere this have driven us from the face of the earth. They are greater than we, because they know so many things that are unknown to us. They implant their strange knowledge in books; and thus it is passed, fresh and unchanged, from one to another. Well, I wish they had not come until my hairs were gray, and I was done with the things of life. Before they came, my people had an empire. Our lands stretched from the barren lands of the south to the great rolling buffalo pastures of the north, and from the wide plains of the east across the tall mountains to the desert in the west. Over that land I would have ruled. My people should have been the greatest of all the Indian nations in the world, and my name should have gone down in the legends of my nation as the bravest and wisest of all the chiefs that ever ruled our allied tribes. But I could no more stand against the whites than a child can stand against a hurricane. It might be that I should be happier if the whites had come generations ago, so that I, too, might have tried to learn of their wondrous knowledge, and so have ruled my people by craft and knowledge instead of by bravery. But to my sons I will have the new knowledge taught; and they may, in after years, be as I would like to be. My sons!

Better had I say my son, for San Antonio is worse than a woman. He does no good. He hates all things, even babes and animals. He will learn neither the new knowledge of the white-skinned people nor the old knowledge that has come down to us, true and unchanged, since the time the Great Spirits dwelt with us upon the earth. Ah! to-day I have much to make my heart unhappy. White-Eye, he who was at once my father, my brother, my teacher, and my friend, is dying. And with the sad thoughts of his waning life come the bitter thoughts of the growing and useless life of my worthless son."

The chief's quick ear heard a footfall in the leaves; and, looking up, he saw San Antonio approaching him. He rode slowly along until he met the boy, then reined in his pony, and said:—

"What causes you to walk forth like an Indian? Why is it that you will stretch your lazy legs, when you might lie at ease in your mother's tent and fight the babes that pass her door?"

San Antonio overlooked the taunt in his father's words, and at once plunged into the details of the insult that had been placed upon him and also upon his father.

The chief listened, his black eyes sparkling, as the boy told of the brutal blows he had received from the quirt. When the tale was told, he said:—

“San Antonio, your mother is my first wife; and for many years she has dwelt with me. I took her to wife when she was but a shy girl, to whose eyes tears would come if she were spoken to by a man. I know that all her years she has been faithful to me; but, if I did not fully believe in her, I would think that you are not my son, and that you were sired by some Pah-Ute, so much like a Pah-Ute, or a snake, or a coyote, are you. You make trouble, and you have never made one minute of joy in all the years of your worthless life. Begone from me, ere I forget that you are my son, and strike you in the face as I would strike an enemy or a fool!”

“But will you stand under the insult that has been put upon your son and your family and yourself?” whined the boy, edging away.

“I will not,” said the chief, slowly. “I will avenge the insult by killing him who insulted. If he call upon the Ta-ta, then will I kill the Ta-ta. And you,—if you ever speak to me of this matter again, I will spit into your face and drive you forth from the tribe. Now begone!”

The chief rode away, never looking to see where his son went. As he rode, his jaws compressed into savage firmness, the whites of his eyes became blood-shot and red, and he wore an expression from which

all feelings but vindictiveness had gone. Soon he came in sight of the agency buildings, and for a moment he stopped and gazed upon them.

“There they stand,” said he, “the houses of the white-faced coyotes who have stolen our lands and robbed us of our manhood. In that place dwells their Ta-ta,—the great eater, who knows no joys but those of his stomach. And it is to him that I owe the fact that the lowest and meanest of my tribe can stand in public places, among men who have followed me to battle, and say that I am no longer a chief and that I am ruled by a fool who knows neither the wisdom of the white men nor the red.”

He savagely spurred his pony and rode briskly forward, soon coming in sight of where the lazy Indians were playing monte. He rode straight to the men, and pulled his pony to a stop only a few feet from them. The men stopped playing and looked curiously at the stern countenance of the chief, wondering if he would not kill his insulter without parley. The man who had whipped San Antonio was uneasy. He looked over at the big log agency building, and saw the agent standing in front of his door. Then he looked at the stern, unpitying, set face of the man who was his chief and ruler; and, all at once, it seemed to him that the agency and the agent were insignifi-

cant; and he would have given all his worldly possessions if he had not struck the chief's son.

"Ho, you," called out the chief, "you who strike boys and deride the chief of your own tribe, stand forth!"

The man detached himself from the little crowd, and stood forth alone. To him the government agency and the agent seemed to have shrunk to minuteness, and the fort of the white soldiers seemed very far away. He remembered that he was a Ute, and only a Ute, and that he was still ruled by the ancient laws of his people. And he trembled as he stood before the stern chief.

In a tone that sounded like a hiss the chief, speaking slowly, said:—

"There was a time when any man who desired the rule of the whites to be above the rule of his own chiefs would have been killed by the tribe as a traitor. You have spoken something of a truth, though. We now are ruled by the white-faced people, and we endure our bondage without murmuring. Yet all true Utes, in their hearts, long still for the old times when we ruled this land; and none but a coward and a fool would vaunt and rejoice because we are so fallen that even our chiefs are ruled by white-faced fools who know not as much as the hopping-toads of the sand-

hills. Yet it is I, more than any other man or men, who have caused my tribe to submit to the new rule of the new owners of the land. Were I to raise my war-cry now, you are the only man among all my people who would fail to at once don the red paint of war and help me to reduce yonder buildings of the whites to ashes. We have submitted to the new rule because it is best so to do, but we are not such craven beasts that we rejoice in our captivity. It is you, coward and fool, you alone, who boast that your people have no chiefs! I deem you unfit to live. I deem you a disgrace to my disgraced nation. And I will kill you! Not to-day, not to-morrow; but in time surely will I kill you. You are a coward and a traitor, and your days on earth are numbered. As you crawl your mean way over the earth, remember that I have sworn to kill you! As you fight boys and women, and truckle to the fools who rule us here, remember that I shall kill you! Your doom is set, your fate is read; for so surely as I live I shall spill your blood upon the ground!"

The chief abruptly turned his pony, and rode silently up the valley. The monte game broke up, and old men told over again of the brave fights of Mah-kotch-ah-wuh when he was young.

"Do you think that he may sound the war-cry,

and call us together to sweep yon hated buildings from the face of the earth ?” asked a young man.

“I hope it may be so,” replied grim old Nannice. “I am growing old, and I feel like a wild eagle that is penned within a cage. I should be glad to spill my blood, and let loose my spirit, if my last day could be spent in warring with the hated whites.”

The autumn changed to winter, and the great peaks of the La Platas were covered with snow. The winter passed, and green came up from the south and got into the leaves of the aspens. And yet Mah-kotch-ah-wuh had never fulfilled his revenge, and the gossips of the tribe began to wonder if he had forgotten the vow he had made.

One day in spring the man who had insulted the chief was walking in the valley, far from any of the huts or tents of the people. He was on foot and alone, but at his side a big revolver swung in a leather holster. Presently he saw a horseman riding up the valley; and, as they came nearer together, he saw that it was Mah-kotch-ah-wuh.

The chief rode on stolidly and silently, his gaze straight before him; and the man began to believe that he would ride by and affect not to see him. But, as the chief's pony came side by side with the

man, Ma-kotch-ah-wuh threw the reins over his pony's head, and the beast stopped in its tracks. The chief lithely sprang from his saddle, faced the man, straightened himself to his full height, and said : —

“ Long ago I promised to you, and to myself, that I would kill you. I hate you! I hate the sight of your coward face! I hate the ground upon which you tread! and I should learn to hate my tribe if you longer remained a part of it! You are armed. I will fight you face to face, man to man. Now defend! ”

The chief drew his revolver; and the man trembled, and threw up his arm, as though to defend himself from the bullet that he knew would soon seek him. Then, with a trembling hand, he drew his revolver. If he had been quick, he could have shot the chief in his tracks; but he was paralyzed with fear, and he only stood and trembled, holding his big revolver in a limp grasp.

The chief gazed at him with supreme contempt. Then again his eyes became red and bloodshot. His face froze in hardness, and his figure became tense and rigid. He drew back his head as does a snake when about to strike. All things became red to his gaze. With his eyes he fastened the eyes of the man before

him, and he held him as a serpent holds a bird. He was an Indian ready for his kill.

Uttering a shout, he threw his revolver in the form of a half-circle, and fired as its muzzle came even with his enemy's breast. There was a loud report, a puff of smoke, the smell of burning cloth; and the man fell backward. He was not killed, for the chief had not intended that.

The fallen man writhed where he lay. His flesh quivered and jerked, and he weakly held his hand over his breast as though to protect his body from further harm.

With a face as stern and pitiless as that of a demon, the chief stood over the fallen man. Then he stooped and looked into his eyes, and said:—

“I will kill you! I will kill you! Your coward soul shall wander, shunned and alone, through the bad lands that lie beyond the true paths! Evil spirits shall haunt you! Good spirits shall shun you! And with owls and witches and evil serpents your coward soul shall dwell!”

He fired a bullet into the shoulder of the prostrate, trembling man, then another into his neck, another into his chest; and then, with the writhing face of a fiend, he shot the fallen man through the heart. He stood for a moment with his foot upon the dead man's

head,—gloating. Then he trampled the head into the dust, stamped his feet into the dead face, and turned and went to his pony.

He was almost joyous by the time he reached his home. His favorite wife was a woman he had captured from an alien tribe in the days of his youth; and he called her, and, as she sat by his side, he chatted to her, and laughed. Then he stroked her hair, and bade her farewell, and went away to perform the medicine-making required of those who have taken human life.

At the Pu-yé Cliffs

“ Strange dreams of what I used to be,
And what I dreamed I would be, swim
Across my vision, faint and dim.”

HIDDEN in the heart of New Mexico, far from the pulsing life of the greater world, surrounded by brown hills, barren mesas, and tufa cliffs and foot-hills that rise mountainward until they merge into the great peaks that rise both to the east and west, lies the Española Valley, one of the most picturesque and beautiful of all the succession of so-called valleys through which the waters of the Rio Grande del Norte flow in all their long journey from the mountain tops of the Sangre de Cristos to the Gulf of Mexico. This valley is a sunland and a dreamland. It is dotted with the quaint and ancient pueblos of the Tehua Indians, with Mexican hamlets and towns, and with little fields and tiny homes that lie along the waterways and the courses of the *acequias*. To the east the Santa Fé range is seen, its towering peaks whitened with snow during almost all the months of the year ; and running down from these mountains the little rivers of Santa Cruz and Pojoaque come, like threads of silver. To the north-west the valley of the Chama leads away toward the brown lands of the Apaches ; and, farther down the river,

the beautiful Santa Clara Valley leads westward, past the tiny summer homes of the Indians, past the ruined cliffs where ancient towns are decaying, on to the heart of the Sierras de los Valles.

There is a little railroad running through the valley, —a quiet railroad enough, but which is, withal, a kind of desecration. The gray adobe walls of the houses, the gloomy *moradas* of that strange sect of *Penitentes* which flourishes there, the old-age life of the Indians, and the pastoral pictures made by the herds of sheep and goats nibbling on the hills and in the little arroyas, are things that it seems should be allowed to exist in their pristinity, without being desecrated by the iron commerce of the white invaders of the soil. But the new ways of the new-comers have as yet had but little effect on the valley and its people; and the vale of Española will long remain one of the quaintest, as it will always be one of the loveliest and most beautiful, of all the beautiful valleys of quaint, sun-kissed, dreamy old New Mexico.

A few miles west of the valley, a thousand feet higher in altitude, there are tufa cliffs rising sheer from the levels of the cañons and little mountain parks, in which were cut—in some age so long gone into the past that its date can only be guessed—the nest-like homes of peoples whose period of existence

and grade in the scale of civilization have long been unanswerable enigmas to students and scientists. The faces of the cliffs are full of the little doorways that gave entrance to these troglodytic homes. And on the tops of the tall mesas are the ruins of ancient stone buildings, many of which must have been four stories high, that also have been without inhabitants for centuries.

This region of the cliff-dwellers and ancient town-dwellers extends about eight miles from east to west, and nearly thirty miles from north to south. The cliff houses are in almost every mesa, the ruined stone fortresses are on almost every eminence; and yet the place is a dead land, almost as arid as a desert, where water rarely flows above the surface, and can be obtained only by digging through a few feet of sand and shale. The vegetation is scant, and, aside from the groves of piñon, spruce, and pine, is sufficient only to give sustenance to a few cattle and sheep that roam there, and that drink the brackish water from the water-holes that have been dug by the herders.

The great loneliness of this land is indescribable. The silence that hangs like a pall over the entire region is intense. The high, whitish-gray cliffs rise, like ancient castle walls, throughout the entire vista, and seem to add to the sense of deathliness that everywhere

prevails. And as one wanders among the fallen walls of the old stone towns that once must have teemed with life and action, as he climbs up the niches and footholds cut in the face of the rocks that once led to human habitations, but now lead only to crumbling caves not even inhabited by bats or reptiles, he feels that he is at one of the ancient places of the world, and that the new life of the new race that now dwells in the land is but as a thing that might have sprung into existence since the sunrise.

How old these now ruined villages and towns are, no one can tell. When the first Spaniards came up from the south, seeking for treasure, and spreading the creed of the martyr of Calvary, they found them without population. But, ages before that, these ancient places were inhabited by races of people who must have been far different from the wild and brutish Apaches and the war-making and marauding Utes, who dwelt in almost all the surrounding lands.

It is now well authenticated from scientific, archæologic, and antiquarian standpoints that the inhabitants of these swallow-nest-like cliff lodges, as well as of the stone fortress towns on the summits, were the ancestors of the Pueblo Indians. These Indians trace their history and descent back through the centuries, in unbroken lines, to the time when the cliffs were

teeming with population. Almost every Pueblo tribe will tell of the particular cliff where its forefathers dwelt. But there are not so many Pueblo tribes as there are ruins; and the Indians say that the tribes from some of the old *owenas*, or towns, went, in those old days, off to the south, and were never heard of again. Might it not be that these silent, weird, old ruined towns were the cradles of the great races that swept, in successive waves, over the Vale of Anahuac and the surrounding countries?

There are many good proofs that the Pueblos are descended from the old peoples of the cliffs. At all the ruined mesa-pueblos are found the curious underground apartments that are supposed to have served the same purposes now served by the so-called *estufas*. On the walls are carvings that the Indians readily identify as their God of Water, and other gods and spirits known in their worship. And the plastering on the walls of the ruins, the grinding-stones found in the caves, the pottery utensils, are very much as are their counterparts of to-day in the quaint old Pueblo towns of the Southwest. Yet, as all these things properly belong to scientific lore, they need not be taken into account here. But there is one other matter that neither science nor the Indians, so far as I know, take into account; namely, that some of the

cliff lodges, and those which are apparently of the greatest antiquity, are too small for people as large as the Pueblos of the present generation to have lived in. In some of the more remote ruins of the Southwest, only these pygmy homes are found; but in the region near the Española Valley only a few of the very small homes exist, usually mingled with the larger ones, and often in the same cliffs. Was there, before the era of the cliff-dwellers proper, a smaller and ruder race, who carved out their tiny homes in the faces of these sheer precipices, in order that they might be safe from their larger and stronger foes who hemmed them in on every side? And, if so, did they migrate or become exterminated before the cliff-dwellers of the Indian legends came, or did they remain, mingle with their conquerors, and become component parts of their nations? The great frowning, deathly-silent cliffs will not give up their secrets as to these things. And, except for the superstitious traditions of some unlettered Indians, and the puerile guesses of a few egotistical scientists, there is no guide to the knowledge.

A few men have gone into this region to measure the old ruins, and study them in connection with the traditions of the Indians, and reconstruct, in imagination, the towns that once stood upon these heights and

commanded the valleys, and to people, in imagination, these places with living, breathing humans, who once loved and hoped and feared and won victories and suffered defeat and reared children and died, as is the lot of all humans.

All the places have names, and one can learn them if he can induce the Indians to talk. There are many things left to hang theories upon, if one will reason understandingly about what he sees; and the region is one of the most interesting and instructive in all the great country that thrives under the emblem of the eagle. But the way to this remote region is long and hard, the work of excavating is toilsome, and these decaying remnants of an ancient semi-civilization are but rarely visited. And thus they lie, silent and unanswering as the Sphinx, under the blue sky and the burning sun of the mysterious land of New Mexico.

A man who dwelt in an Eastern city heard of these places; and he was seized with the desire to journey to them, explore them, trace myths of them through the traditions of the Indians, and ascertain if some clew to their secrets might not be found. He visited one of the adobe pueblos in the valley, examined the pottery and grinding-stones, drew old legends from the old men, and then, with two Indians as guides and servants, he went to the cliffs. He took with

him a tent, provisions, and cooking utensils, and was prepared for a long stay. He measured the cliffs and ruins at old Sankay-week-carey, and, in imagination, builded again the peerless diamond-shaped rock fortress that once stood upon its crest. He visited the cliff of the Shu-finné, and wondered if it had not been occupied by some rebellious offshoot from one of the larger tribes, as the number of its "houses" are fewer than at the other cliffs. And then he went to the mesa which the pueblos call Pu-Yé; and here he pitched his tent, and settled down for a long period of work and study.

He liked the Pu-Yé the best of all the ruined towns. The *owena*, or pueblo, on the crest of the cliff had been excavated to a greater extent than the others; and the view from the narrow eastern point of the mesa was one that would repay a traveller for journeying to the end of the earth to gaze upon.

One day the explorer found that his supplies were running short; and he despatched his two Indians, on horseback, to Española for more. They went away in the morning; and all the forenoon he worked alone, making measurements and digging potsherds from the caves. In the afternoon, being fatigued, he sat down upon the south-western face of the mesa, below the ruined cliff pueblo, to rest. Away to the east he

could trace the course of the Rio Grande, which wound its way, like a thread of molten silver, through the land. The two little sister rivers could be seen winding into it from the east; and to the south-east, rising like the head of a monster out of the earth, was the Black Mesa, historic in Tehuan legends as being the impregnable fortress to which the Indians always retired when sorely pressed by their foes. In every direction, as far as his sight could reach, was a world of mesas and chalk-colored cliffs and cañons and mountains and valleys.

The man turned from his rapt enjoyment of the marvellous scene that was unfolded before him, and was greatly surprised to find that a woman stood near him. He supposed that he had been too engrossed to hear her approach. After a few moments' awkward silence, he raised his hat, bowed, and addressed her.

The woman bowed, and slightly smiled; and, as she did so, the traveller observed that she was uncommonly beautiful. Her hair was as yellow as melted gold when it comes fresh from the crucible, her eyes were of an indescribable misty blue, and her skin was as white and as fair as the petals of a lily. Her form was lissome and slender, yet fully developed and perfectly proportioned; and the soft undulations of her bosom caused her silken garments to rise and fall with

a gentle motion. Her hands were small and soft, and she wore a jewel that flashed and gleamed like a star.

“I am glad to know that this place is not so deserted as I had thought,” said the man. “I supposed that I was entirely alone, and that there was no living human being nearer to me than at the house of a wood-cutter, who dwells four miles further up the valley. My two Indian servants have gone to the little town in the valley for supplies. I am exploring this interesting place. Are you, too, exploring? And where are the others of your party?”

The woman smiled as the traveller delivered himself of this rather disjointed and disconnected speech, and she said: —

“I am not exploring the ruins. I know them all and know them well, and finished my explorations long ago. And there are no others in my party. I, too, am alone. But are you not going to ask me to be seated?”

With his handkerchief the man brushed away the dust from a rock, and the woman smiled as she sat down.

“Do you live near here?” asked the man. “I thought this entire region uninhabited, except for an occasional Mexican herder or wood-cutter.”

The woman smiled into the man's face as an adult might smile at a child, and she said:—

“Do you think that the scantness of inhabitancy here gives you the right to ask me so many questions? I ask you no questions. I express no curiosity about you and your domicile and your environments; but I am content to sit here with you, and enjoy this marvellous panorama that has few equals on the face of the earth. I have journeyed much, and to far countries; but to me this crest of old Pu-Yé is one of the dearest spots in all the world. I love the valley of Maltrata in Mexico; and Loch Lomond with its frame of brown hills; and the Columbia River on a spring day, when the clouds rise, one layer after another, from the green earth to the blue sky, is another of my dearest places. But, above them all, I think this is my favorite landscape.”

The man stared at the woman in great wonder. It was strange that a delicate, well-dressed, and refined woman should be alone with him on the top of an uninhabited mesa, miles from human habitancy, and stranger still that she should talk to him with as utter nonchalance as though she had been in her own drawing-room. Her costume, too, was entirely out of keeping with the surroundings. Her dress was of silk, and was cut after some flowing, loose, Oriental

fashion. Her shoes were low, and were of the lightest and daintiest kind; and her head was bare, except for a loose silken scarf that fell lightly over her hair.

Yet the situation did not seem so unusual to the man as it would have done, were it not for a strange feeling he had that he knew the woman, or some one very like her. But he knew he had never seen her before. When she smiled into his eyes again, he became perfectly at ease.

As they talked, the man forgot the strangeness of the situation, and forgot to make further inquiries. He forgot all, except that he was contented and happy. And he and the strange woman sat together on the brink of the old cliff of Pu-Yé, and gazed over the beautiful vistas that opened to their view. They talked of the people who must once have lived in those strange places, but who were now utterly gone, and whose memories, save for a few traditions, were as completely lost to the present people of the earth as though they had never existed.

“Do you suppose they were like us?” asked the man. “Do you suppose that the men of that time had ambitions that could never be realized and hopes that could never be fulfilled? Or do you think that they were content, and lived out their simple lives in peace, except when they had to protect themselves

from the savages who came upon these places from the wilderness to kill and pillage?"

"But why do you wonder about the men alone, and not about the women, too?" asked the woman.

"Do you not think that the women who dwelt in these narrow homes in the face of the cliffs, and in the great stone houses that crowned the top of the mesas, might have been in many ways as are the women of our own time? Do you not wonder if they loved their husbands and their sweethearts and their children, if they felt the blight of disappointment and the joy of fulfilment, as do the women who now dwell in the world?"

"I forgot to think of the ancient women, I presume because I know so little of women. I suppose my life has been far from being full, for I have known but few women; and I have never been in love with one. I have never met a woman who was more to me than any other woman."

The woman smiled again, and her great blue eyes seemed to be swimming in hazy mists.

"You speak of this life alone," said she.

"Well, as it is the only life I have lived, it is the only one I know about."

"You do not know it to be the only one you have lived, and it need not be the only one you can know about," replied the woman.

“Can you tell me of the life I shall live in the future?” asked the man, curiously.

“I can tell you nothing of the future, but I think I know something of your past. It seems to me that you once dwelt at this place, and that you then loved a woman, and knew more of the secrets and truths of existence than you now know. I think you dwelt here, and that I knew you then.”

“But no one has dwelt here for centuries,” said the man.

“I know,” said the woman. “It was ages ago — long, almost countless ages ago — when you and I dwelt here. But I remember you.”

Was the woman a maniac? The man could not harbor such an idea for more than an instant; for her bright eyes were full of reason, and every lineament of her beautiful face was brimming with intelligence. The man pondered over her strange statements, which were made in seeming gravity and sincerity. Then he remembered tales he had heard of a strange creed of reincarnations of the soul, and of lives lived long ago and remembered in this life. The woman must entertain those strange beliefs. He remembered, too, that one of the tenets of the strange belief was the idea of indissoluble affinities, of kindred souls that belonged with each other and to each other, and that should

know and recognize the bond of kinship whenever they came together. This thought brought to his mind the idea that the woman might consider that she was his affinity. He had heard that such a belief would take people across the world,—and the Pu-Yé is almost as remote as Khartoum.

As though reading the man's thoughts, the woman sat smiling. Then she said: —

“It is true that I believe in reincarnations, and also in affinities. But I am not your affinity, although I have known her. I am nothing to you, save that I am a woman and you are a man. Even that means a great deal; but to you it means nothing in comparison with the knowledge that your affinity, now forgotten by you, exists, and will some time be known to you again.”

“There is no such woman,” said the man. “There is no such woman in the world, and all women are as one to me. I know not the meaning of the word ‘love’; and if you, in your wisdom, can teach me its meaning, I shall be very grateful.”

“It is true that, save for indistinct memories that you do not understand, you know not the meaning of love. I cannot teach you, but I could cause you to remember.”

As the woman talked, she gazed into the man's

eyes; and he felt a strange sensation of drowsiness coming over him. Her last words sounded to him as an echo coming to his ears from a long distance. He gazed listlessly and unseeingly across the great valley that lay to the east, but he did not speak. The woman rose and came nearer to him, all the time gazing intently into his eyes.

“It is better now that you rest,” she said. “It is better that you rest and sleep. Forget, forget, and sleep!”

The words she spoke sounded to the man as a lullaby sounds to a tired child. He closed his eyes drowsily, leaned back, making a pillow of his arms, and knew that he was falling asleep. Then, half-realizing that his actions were very unusual, he made an effort to rouse himself. Again came the softly spoken words: —

“Rest! Be peaceful, and rest, and sleep! Forget, and rest, and sleep!”

And the man, lying prone upon the earth, on the arid top of the gray mesa of ancient Pu-Yé, succumbed to the strange influence of the strange woman; and he was soon breathing the breath of deep and peaceful sleep.

How long the man slept, he knew not; but when he awoke, the morning sun was shining full into his

face. He lay prone upon his back for a little time in drowsy enjoyment, and he lazily tried to remember where he was.

“The sky is above me, so I must be out-of-doors,” he said. “Let me remember. Oh, yes! I am at the cliffs of Pu-Yé, and must have grown tired, and fallen asleep from fatigue. How was it? I must think! Oh, yes! I sent my Indian servants to the town, and I was alone. But I seem to remember a woman who came to the cliff and talked to me. Ah! I remember now. She was here when I fell asleep. How stupid it was of me!”

This thought caused him to leap to his feet. And, when he had risen and looked about him, he thought for an instant that he was crazed or enchanted. The mesa was teeming with people. Red women and girls, with large water-jars upon their heads, climbed up the side of the cliff. Red men were walking over the mesa, while others sat under the shade of trees, polishing stone implements or moulding pottery. Children played in quiet groups. And off to the west, where the pile of crumbling rocks had been, there arose a great stone structure, high and massive, with smoke rising from its scores of chimneys, and with armed guards walking over its thick outer walls. He gazed into the valley below him; and there arose

another mass of buildings, also teeming with population. He could see people passing in and out of the cliff-homes, and he observed that the cliff seemed more sheer than he had known it. Where he had seen but a dry, sandy arroyo, there now flowed a stream of clear, limpid water; and all up and down this stream were little fields, where low corn plants and gourd vines and tobacco were growing.

The man stood gazing in stupid wonder and astonishment, and a strange horror began to take hold of him. What had happened to him, and to life, and to the world? Was his mind failing him, and were these people and this strange land and that great stone fortress but things that delirium had conjured up in his disordered brain? As he wondered and feared, he was startled by hearing a soft laugh near him. Turning, his eyes fell upon a beautiful girl, red like the other women about him, but who seemed to him as one he knew well and had always known. And even his perplexity was not great enough to prevent him from observing that she was very beautiful.

“How strangely you act, dear one!” said the girl. “You have slept; and you must have dreamed of warfare or of evil spirits, for your eyes were wild as you looked about you. I think you were looking for evil witches to come out of the sky, or for a band of Apaches to come stealing up our stone stairways.”

The man understood all the girl said; yet he remembered that it was a strange language to him, different from his own, and one that he did not think he had ever heard before. And he marvelled more when he found that the answer he made to the girl was in the same speech as her own.

“I know not where I am,” he said. “I remember sleeping; and I have dreamed and I have awakened, and that is all.”

He ceased speaking, and again gazed about him in bewilderment. The girl affectionately embraced him, took his hand in her warm clasp, and said: —

“I fear you are not well, dear heart. You think too much, and study too much and too long, striving to find out all the knowledge that is known to men, and that has been gathered since the world began. You were so weary that you fell asleep as you sat by my side. You are weary yet, and now you must rest. And, too, you must eat. Come with me, and I will prepare food.”

All at once everything seemed natural to the man. He felt as feels one who has become confused about the points of the compass, and then reaches some familiar landmark that makes the directions clear to him again. And he kissed the girl, and said: —

“I have had a strange dream, loved one of mine;

and it was so vivid and so true to what might have been, that the vestiges of it remained in my brain, and my mind was not clear when I awoke. But it is gone now, and I am well. And, as I am not hungry, sit you down by me here, and let me be happy in having you with me alone."

The man gazed at his own body, and it seemed natural to him that the color of his skin was red. It seemed natural, too, that he was clad only in a girdle and a loose robe, that a feather was stuck in the band that held his thick black hair, and that sandals made of the fibre of yucca and soled with deerskin were on his feet. It was also natural that the girl was red, and that she was barefooted and bareheaded, and clad in a gown or robe that half revealed the rounded beauties of her form. And, more than all, it was natural that he loved her more than he loved himself, more than he loved his power over the men of his nation, more than he loved the creed of which he was priest, more than he loved all else in the world. And he sat by the woman and held her hand and caressed her soft cheek, and forgot that the hours were flying and that the sun was journeying toward the west.

They gazed at the busy life of the cliffs and the *owenas*. On the sheer sides of the mesa, little gardens, clinging like birds'-nests to the face of the rock, and

fenced in with great jagged stones, showed patches of greenery. Other little stone enclosures held wild turkeys. On the open ground on top of the mesa, groups of men were husking corn; while lines of men were climbing up to the top from the valley below, bearing great bundles of wood supported by bands fastened to their heads. Women and girls came in from other mesas, carrying clay that they were bringing to mould into pottery. On the walls of the great building were seen women who fashioned clay jars and bowls. And far down the valley could be seen approaching a band of people, men and women, many in number, who marched in regular order and sang as they marched. They were tillers, who had been to the fields in the valley of the great river in the east, and who travelled in bands to insure safety. Hunters came in from the forests, as the sun sank low. Children trooped away to their homes for the evening meal. Men went from their toils to the underground apartments called *tab-eh*, and women bore baskets of food and jars of water to them. Fresh guards mounted the great walls, and began their ceaseless marching up and down, and took up their part of the watchful vigil that never ceased.

No one disturbed the priest and his bride, and they sat in the glory of the waning sun and gazed upon the

living scenes before them. In time they arose, and went to the gateway of the great stone fortress-house. The guards, who stood at either side of the gateway, leaning upon their long, obsidian-tipped spears, reverently saluted as they passed. And the girl said: —

“I am so glad and so proud, dear one of mine, that you are the Ruler of the Waters. When you must fast, and perforce be away from me, I long for your presence. But I do not grieve, for I console myself with the thought that the great God of the Mists loves you more than he loves any one else in all this great nation of people. I rejoice that you are the dearest one to him, and that you know all the secrets he left upon the earth when he went from us to dwell at the right hand of his Father in the sun. I would love you, dear heart, if you were the lowest and poorest of our people; but I love you more because you are the greatest, the wisest, the best, and the most holy.”

The man was the ruler and chief priest of his nation, and the beautiful girl was his bride. But a few months had gone into the past since they had wed; and since that time they had been as happy as they hoped to be when their lives were over, and they should receive their rewards for right living and should dwell in the bright houses of turquoise in the sun.

Children racing and playing across the great central plaza of the place stopped and gazed as the priest and his bride passed by. Men and women closed their hands together and bowed low in reverence. And, as he gazed upon the great towering structure that was a house of many homes, and yet was but a part of the great city he ruled; as he saw the riches of his nation, and the looks of love and reverence upon their faces, the priest felt that it was good to live and good to rule and good to have high honor among his people. And, when he was within the home of his bride, and was seated by the side of his beautiful loved one, he felt that it was doubly good to love. And he said to his bride that love was greater than riches or honor or praise or wealth.

The priest and his family need do no work. They were served by the other people, in turn; and much rivalry was shown as to who should be the favored ones who should serve them. When they entered their own rooms in the great house, blankets and robes of fur were spread for them by the women and girls who awaited their coming; and soon food was served to them. There was Indian maize; the roots and pods of yucca, cooked with pungent herbs; there was game and wild fowl, and plants cooked in various ways. There was clear filtered water that had been

cooled in porous earthen jars. And, when the meal was done, tobacco was given to the young priest, and he and his bride were left alone. He smoked as she sat by his side and gazed upon him with the lovelight shining from her slumbrous, beautiful eyes.

There came a tap at the door; and soon a band of the *Kosbaar*, or delight-makers, entered. Some of them were old men, some were youths; and there was one little boy, only as high as a man's hip, who was gaudily decked out in bright colors and waving plumes. They saluted the priest and his bride, and craved permission to sing and dance. Permission being given, they ranged themselves about the room, and sang an opening song in weird cadences. Then the little boy danced alone to the beating of a rude drum. Then, all together, they mimicked bears and deer and mountain lions and eagles. They sang songs that embodied the gossip of the city, and they made witty verses about the chiefs and headmen and famous hunters. They were so full of glee, and so untiring in their efforts to amuse, that the priest and his bride laughed till the night rang with their merriment. Then, laden with presents, the *Kosbaar* went away, repeating blessings as they went.

The youthful priest and his girl-bride sat for a time in silence, smiling as they mused upon the antics of

the delight-makers. Then they retired to their couch of furs and yucca blankets; and he pillowed his head upon her breast, and talked to her again of the great love he bore for her. They promised to each other that their love should last, young, undimmed, and untarnished, through all the days and years of their lives, and that after they were done with the things of the world it should last again through all the years of the happy eternity they would spend together in the bright, deathless land of endless joy that their Great Father had created in the sun.

“But what of the strange dream you had this morning, as you slept in the air, dear one?” asked the girl. “I know that I am but a woman, and that it is unlawful for women to know the greatest mysteries; yet I am troubled about that dream, for the look upon your face when you awoke was one that I never saw there before. Can you not tell me of the dream?”

“It was a strange dream, a strange dream and a weird one,” answered he, stroking her hand. “I have had many dreams, and it is given that much wisdom comes to me in dreams. But never in all the years of my life, never when I was initiate or since I have been priest, has such a dream taken possession of my brain. I know not what it portends

or means; but to-morrow, or the next day, or whenever I can spare the time from your sweet companionship, I shall go alone to my sacred place, and there I shall perform the mysteries, and strive and fast, until I learn what meaning it has."

"But what was the dream, twin soul of mine? May you not tell me?"

"Yes, I may tell you of the dream, dear bride. It deals not with any of our sacred mysteries, and it is so passing strange that I am glad to talk of it with some one. I know not how it began. I had no dream of dying, and no dream of any life between the one I now know and the one I lived in my dream. It seemed to me that I was a man, and a very different man from any that has ever been seen in the world. I dreamed that my skin was white, that my eyes were blue, that my hair was as fair as the first leaves of the maize, and that I knew and had seen multitudes of people whose skins were also white, and who dwelt in places not like the places where we dwell, nor like any places known in the world. And I thought that I heard a tale of a strange, dead land in the west, where people once had dwelt, but whose ancient inhabitants were forgotten upon the earth. I was seized with a desire to see that place, and I journeyed there; and, dear bride of my heart, the

place I came to was this place. It was our own lovely and well-beloved Pu-Yé, but it was not as it now is. The homes in the face of the cliff were deserted, and crumbling into decay, and were half filled with fine dust that the winds of centuries had blown into them. The great building that we dwell in was but a heap of crumbling stones, and it was entirely without inhabitants. The *owena* in the valley was but a pile of sand and rocks. The very stream had dried up. The game and fowls had deserted the land. Water could be found only by digging under the ground; and a curse seemed to rest upon the place, and no people dwelt here at all."

"Will such a curse come, dear one? Can you not avert it by praying and making magic?" asked the woman, anxiously.

"I think such a curse will not come," answered the man, "although, when our God of the Fine Mists dwelt upon the earth with us, he left a saying that ages in the future a white-faced people — the To-wah-tsee-ee of our Sacred Story — would come to our land from the great unknown lands of the east. But I think my dream was all a fantasy, and that it betokens nothing real. For, although I saw this place in my dream, I had no remembrance of ever having seen it before or of having known you. And,

surely, a dream with no memory of you in it would not be real. Then I dreamed that I sat on the brink of the cliff, and wondered what manner of people had once dwelt in these places. And, as I mused and wondered, there came to me a strange white woman, with hair as yellow as the arrows shot by the morning sun, and eyes as blue as is the sky when it is seen in glimpses through the mists. She was beautiful,—almost as beautiful as you are, loved one. And she told strange things to me, and said to me that somewhere there was a woman that I loved. And the strangest thing of all that dream, sweet one, was that I could remember no such woman. Then the woman gazed into my eyes; and her look seemed to give her mastery over me, and she commanded me to sleep. I slept; and that is all. And never in my life has an awakening been so pleasant; for I awoke from that dream of a joyless life, and found you, and love, and this dear land, and my own great people. In the cruel dream I had forgotten you and all else that I know, and I can remember yet the coldness that I felt in my heart.”

They talked for a time of the dream, but soon forgot it to talk of love, which was the chief theme in the world for them. In time they desired to sleep; and the woman folded the man closer to her bosom,

and drowsily and happily told him that, when he awoke in the morning, he must not forget her nor again forget where he was. And the mists of forgetfulness enwrapped their memories, and they slept.

The man again awoke. He was lying upon his back; and, as he gazed upward, he saw the sky, and the first faint, pale rays of the morning sunshine were just beginning to diffuse color through it. For a little time this did not seem strange to him; but soon he remembered that he had gone to sleep in the couch and the house of his bride, with a roof above him and with walls protecting him. He put out his hand to place it upon the form of his loved one,—whom he supposed was sleeping by his side,—in order to assure himself of her presence; but his hand came in contact only with loose sand. He clutched a handful of the sand, and held it up before his eyes and stupidly stared at it. Then he looked about him, and found that his body was imbedded in sand, and that many people were near him, and all were sleeping under coverings of sand. He arose to a sitting posture; and, spread out on the sand by his side, he saw the matted hair of a woman. He put his hand upon the hair, and the woman awoke, and sleepily half arose and turned and smiled into his face. And he seemed to know the woman, although his mind was still clinging to the

memory of the other more beautiful woman who was his bride.

“Where am I? And what has befallen?” he asked.

“You are just awakening; and nothing has befallen except that the sun is rising, and it is time for us to arise and eat,” answered the woman. She spoke softly, and reached over and caressed him as she spoke.

As the woman arose, the man observed that she was very small, and that she was unclad save for a skin girdle that she wore about her, and another untanned skin which she drew over her shoulders. And, when he also arose, he saw that he himself was small, and that his garments were much as were those of the woman.

One by one the other people arose, shook the sand from their hair and their bodies, and began digging up roots and eating them. The women caught beetles and lizards; and they, too, were eaten. Then they all lay face downward in the sand, and drank from the little stream that was there.

“Why do you gaze at me and at all things so strangely?” asked the woman.

“I have dreamed,” replied the man. “I seemed to have forgotten you and my people and this land,

and even myself, as I am in reality, and to have been living another kind of life. I seemed to know the cliff where we have our place of abode cut out of the rock; but I, and the other people who dwelt there, were much larger than we are, and they all had fine garments and many great things that are unknown to us. Those people were as great in stature as are the new people who have come upon the earth,—those terrible killers, who seek to drink the blood of men, and who have caused us to cut our abiding places high above the level of the valleys, so that we may be safe from them. But the people of my dream were not like the killers, and they were kind, and made not war for blood. And on the top of our cliff was a great building made of stones cunningly joined together, and it was so strong that the enemies of that people feared to attack them. Those people never hungered. They had great weapons that enabled them to kill the great, fierce buffalo; and they had many fields in which grew things good for food. Ah, it was happiness even to dream of so much to eat! But it was a dream, and it means nothing. So let us catch beetles, in order that we may eat.”

All day the man and the other people wandered, hunting small animals, which they killed with stones, and seeking edible roots, which they made into

bundles and bore upon their heads as they walked. They had been hunting for two days; and, as their bundles had grown to be as heavy as they could bear, they were journeying again toward the cliffs where they dwelt. One man walked on ahead of the rest; and once a sharp hiss of warning came from him, as he leaped behind a great tufa rock that had fallen from a mesa-top into the valley. The others silently crept behind the great rock, and they trembled as a great bear passed down the valley. Again during the day the scout warned them; and they all hid in shaking fear as a tall, naked Indian — one of the new race of Killers who had lately come into the world — was seen at a little distance. At night they came to the cliffs of the Pu-Yé, in the faces of which their little houses had been cut out. They had chosen this place, and carved out their homes high in the cliff, in order that they might be safe from the large, fierce men who had invaded their land, and before whom they could no more stand than a fawn could stand before the fierce puma of the mountains.

Their cliff-burrows were small. Each had but a single room, and they were empty save for a few rabbit skins and some dry leaves. As soon as they were within these places, they ate of the food they had brought with them; and then they lay down and

slept. In the morning they awoke, ate again, and again slept.

As the sun was sinking from the zenith, the man and woman, being surfeited with sleep, arose, climbed down the perilous niches that served them as a ladder, and, having drunk from the stream, they sat down in the sand to talk.

“What of the dream you had last night?” asked the woman.

“I know nothing of it, except that which I told you yesterday,” answered the man. “It was a strange thing, though, that I forgot you in it. That was the strangest of all; for you are dearer to me than all else, and it is not natural that I should forget you even in a dream. It is a wondrous thing that you and I are so dear to each other. The other men and women seem to care little for each other, but to you and me the other of us is all the world. Our lives are so full of want and hunger and fear of our enemies and terror of the great animals and of the evil spirit, that, if it were not for you and for your love, I think I would not care to live.”

The man placed his arm about the woman, and pressed his cheek to hers. And he told her again that he loved her and would always love her. And she nestled in his arm and fondled him, and the light

of the joy of love was in her eyes. But, aside from the love they bore each other, life held nothing for these people except the pleasures of eating and drinking and sleeping.

They wandered together throughout the little valley that lay under the frowning cliff where they lived. They prattled to each other like two children at play, and they laughed and were glad because they lived and loved. That night they lay down together in the narrow little room of rock that they had carved out of the cliff; and, as the man's eyes began to grow heavy with sleep, he remembered the strange dream he had had of a broader life and a greater love. And he slept; and by him slept his loved one, her matted, unkempt hair mingling with his own, and her hand fast clasped in his.

Again the man awoke. The sun had travelled far past the meridian and was sinking toward the west. He remembered that he always slept where he chanced to be when night came, so he did not think it strange that he was out-of-doors. But it seemed unusual to him that he should sleep until the day had grown so old. He reached out his hand to feel for the woman's hair, as his first act upon awakening always was to place his hand upon her matted tresses. He did not feel the hair, and sat up in surprise; for she always

slept near him, and her hair was always near his head.

He arose, and stretched his arms out; and, when he chanced to gaze down upon himself, he saw that his body was of unusual size, and that it was clad in strange garments. He looked at his hands, and saw that they were white. And then he remembered.

The sun was sinking behind the Sierras de los Valles, and the blue shadows cast by the peaks seemed to jeer at him and mock him. Lines of filmy mist were forming above the foot-hills and over the valley of the Rio Grande; and they seemed to call to him, saying that he, and life, and the world, and love, were only dreams, and phantasms, and mirages. He looked about for the strange, beautiful woman who had put him to sleep; but she was nowhere to be seen. He would have been tempted to believe that she had not been there, and that she was but some unreal image that had come to him in his dream,—or his series of dreams within a dream,—but, lying on the gray rock where she had sat, he found the soft, white, filmy lace that she had worn upon her head.

The Law of Seh-now-wuff

I KNOW a quiet nook in a picturesque valley where dwells an Indian chief with his wife and some of his grandchildren. Far to the west of the valley, snow-capped mountains rise skyward to great heights; and to the south is one of the broad mesas, or table-lands, that are so characteristic of the lands where the Indians dwell. A little river ripples and gurgles past the place to the west, and back of the dwelling-place of the chief is a wild meadow where horses and sheep and goats are grazing. It is a quiet and pastoral place; and the chief's home, instead of being merely a brush wigwam, consists of a board house with a tent at one side, and a rude barn and granary are near at hand. Ploughs are seen about the place, and wagons and harness and other farmer gear. And, indeed, the chief is now a farmer; and tilled fields are all about his home, while a little acequia brings water for irrigation from the noisy little river.

The chief himself is a quiet man with a grave face, and the look of sadness so common to Indian faces in repose with him amounts at times to a look of misery. He is popular in his tribe, and is proud of his skill and eloquence as an orator. The white men like him, and the Indian agent is proud to call this man his friend. His fields are fat, his herds and flocks are many, his

wife is comely, his children and grandchildren are among the best people in the tribe; and it would seem that this man, growing old with honor, and possessing fame with good repute, should be happy. But he is so unhappy indeed that often he sits for long hours under the shade of the little porch of his house, and longs for the time of his death to come, when he can be free from memory and sorrow. I learned the cause of this man's sadness, and I will write down the tale; but, beyond saying that he is a Ute, I shall not identify him. The *Ute-ab* is a great nation, numbering thousands, and many chiefs and sub-chiefs rule the nation. So it will not be easy for any of the few who know these tribes to say what man this tale is about. His name shall be written down here as Te-Aguen, which, in the language of his people, means "Friend"; and, indeed, it is a name often bestowed upon him by his people in their common conversation.

The tale of Te-Aguen really begins in myth and tradition and superstition. The Utes believe that in the beginning of time there was darkness upon the face of the earth and over the waters, and that no living thing existed except the Great Spirit, whose name is Seh-now-wuff, and his brother, the Evil Spirit, whose name is Yo-woy-witch. The genesis of this people relates that Seh-now-wuff created all the

red nations of the world, but gave his love and his protection and his guidance only to the *Ute-ah*, whose very name means "A Chosen People," or "A People Apart." In the glad days of the long, long ago, this great god came to the earth and dwelt with his people, and ruled them and gave them laws that exist until this day, and that have been sacredly observed until these evil later times when the lands have been overrun by the white despoilers, who have brought new laws and sore punishments for their infraction. These ancient laws of Seh-now-wuff were told to the first maker of medicine, and by him to his successor, and so on down through all those countless generations of men that have been since the god committed the great sin, and then went to dwell forever in the bright land of the sun, and prepare there a happy land for his people to journey to and dwell in after death. The makers of medicine recite many of these laws to the people in the councils, and even in gatherings where women and children are. And when he was young, which was before the white soldiers had come over the eastern mountains and plains, often had Te-Aguen sat and listened to these sacred rules, and resolved that all the days of his life he would fulfill them all to the uttermost tittle. To this day he can close his eyes, and in memory he is again

seated in the council wick-e-up, listening to old Tarap-ah-wush droning off the laws and then making the young men and boys repeat them after him word for word.

“If a Ute man take away the wife of another Ute, the one who is injured can go to the home of the one who has despoiled him, kill a horse, and take away another horse. The horse that is killed is a sign of his sorrow for his bereavement, and the horse that he takes is in payment for the loss of his wife.”

So runs one section of the code, and Te-Aguen can say it word for word to this day.

“If a wife is unfaithful to her husband, sinning with another man of our own tribe, the injured husband may beat his wife. If she sins with a man of another tribe, the punishment shall be that the woman’s nose shall be slit so that she shall be thereafter branded as unfaithful all the days of her life. But, if she shall sin with any man of another color from that of the Indians, she shall surely be killed as soon as the sin is known. And, if her sin is not discovered until a child has been born, that child shall at once be killed; for it is not lawful that the blood of white men or black men or yellow men shall flow with Ute blood.”

So runs another of the old laws of Seh-now-wuff,

and it is one that every Ute girl has recited to her from the time she is old enough to talk. Many of the laws are modified and hedged about with many provisos, and so distorted that it is easy to condone moral laxity and hard to establish conjugal sin; but the law that relates to men of alien color and to children of two bloods is immutable, and is even yet above the law of the Indian agent. And it is because that law is in the Ute code that the chief Te-Aguen often sits on his little porch until far into the night, wishing that he were dead, that his body might return to clay, and his spirit fly to the sun, there to atone for the sin that he did.

When Te-Aguen was young, he held much aloof from the other young people of the tribe. Much love-making went on among the youths and maidens, but it was not for him. And, when the men sat together about the camp fire and related tales of their conquests of the other sex, Te-Aguen drew his blanket about him, and sat silent; for his mind was wholly filled with thoughts of Keahnatch, whose eyes were like stars shining through a mist, and whose hair was as soft as the blossoms of the flowering trees in spring. Often he sat silent, listening to hear if her name should be vaunted by any of the vainglorious boasters, resolved to kill the man who should say ill of her.

But her name was never mentioned by the amorous boasters; for the girl (whose name meant "The Light-hearted One") was a good girl with a pure mind, and she never went forth among the people unless accompanied by her mother.

Then the power of the white men began to be shown, and in time came the dread decree that Ute children and young men and maidens should go to the schools that were in far places, there to learn the harsh speech of the whites, and the boys be taught to plough and reap, and the girls be instructed in sewing and new ways of cooking. The commissioners who came to make the selections chose "The Light-hearted One" to go with the others. Te-Aguen was older than the girl, so much so indeed that he could not have gone to the school if he had desired; but his shyness, which until then had kept him mute, was now overcome by his grief because the girl was to go away, and he told her, in simple words, the tale of his love for her. The maid was very glad that she had won the love of the young brave, and she promised that as soon as she returned from school she would become his wife. Then, clad in her finest dress, made of the tanned skin of mountain goats, and with new beaded moccasins on her feet, Keahnatch went away to school.

After she was gone, time hung very heavy on the hands of Te-Aguen. He tired of the councils, of the hunts, and even of listening to the tales told by the old men; and it was not long until he went away down the valley, to the very place where he lives to this day, and began to make a home to which Keahnatch should be welcomed upon her return. He built a wick-e-up out of strong branches and brush; he cut new tent poles, and built a new tent; and he made a fireplace out of clay. Then he traded among the men, and got Navajo blankets and kettles that had come from traders as far away as Santa Fé, and jars and pottery that had been brought by the Pueblo Indians. And at night he lay down in his new tent, on his bed of blankets, and dreamed of the happiness that would be his when "The Light-hearted One" should be his wife.

Months passed,—long, weary months of loneliness for Te-Aguen. And then, one day, from over the eastern mesas came a caravan of ponies, bearing home the young Utes who had passed so much weary time at the hated school. Te-Aguen saddled his fleetest pony, and rode out to meet his sweetheart; and he was very proud as he entered the camp, riding by her side. That night a great dance and a feast were given to welcome the wanderers home again, and

Te-Aguen and Keahnatch frolicked together in the dances and games like two children. And, when the dance was over and the feast had been eaten, and little children were sleeping by the wood fire built in the open, Te-Aguen led Keahnatch to his new home as his wife.

Keahnatch seemed very happy. She caressed her husband, and whispered soft words of love into his ear, and never seemed to tire of telling him how glad she was to be away from the despised school and back with him in the valley, where her life could be free and there were no hateful books to study. But often a look of sadness would pass over her face, and often she would gaze wistfully and even timorously into the eyes of her husband. And so two days passed,—the two happiest days that have ever been in the life of Te-Aguen, the Ute. On the third day after his marriage, Te-Aguen said to his wife that on that night they would go to the main encampment of the tribe to hear an old man expound the sacred laws of their nation. And, at night, as they sat in the circle of solemn listeners about the blazing fire, Te-Aguen gently pressed the hand of his wife as the old man who was talking droned out the law referring to the sins of Ute women with men of another color. Keahnatch looked troubled, and trembled, and a shudder convulsed her frame.

In time the meeting was over; and the young man and his wife returned to their home, walking down the valley hand in hand. Te-Aguen kindled a fire, and Keahnatch procured cold meat and other food for a lunch.

“Now let us sleep, dear one, for the night grows old,” said the man.

Keahnatch unrolled the blankets and skins that served as a bed, took off her fine garments that had been worn to the meeting, and prepared to retire, her husband gazing upon her fondly the while.

“Do you think the laws left upon earth by the Great Spirit, Seh-now-wuff, are just and true laws, my husband?” asked Keahnatch, falteringly.

“Surely,” answered her husband, in some surprise. “When I was a little boy, I talked with old men who had lived for more than a hundred summers; and they told me that the laws were known, word for word as they are now, when they themselves were little boys. And they said that other old men, who were old when they were young, had told them that it was the same in their childhood, and that it has been so from the beginning of time. Surely, the laws of Seh-now-wuff are true and just; for did he not in his wisdom make laws about horses before any horses except his own magic horse were known in the world? But why do you ask?”

“At the school I was told that the laws of Seh-now-wuff are lies, and that they are also foolish,” slowly answered the wife.

“The people at the school are liars, and they love not the truth,” replied Te-Aguen, sententiously.

“But, if one believed the talk of the white people, and thus unknowingly sinned against Seh-now-wuff’s law, would the sin be the same?” asked she who might now have well been called the “Heavy-hearted One.”

“Surely, dear heart. But why do you worry about the old laws? I have made a law for you; and it says that you are to hold me close in your arms and press kisses upon my lips, and that you and I must be happier than two people ever have been since the time Seh-now-wuff created the races of men.” And he stooped and kissed his wife upon her cheek.

Keahnatch feebly returned the caress, and then remained silent. Soon they lay down upon their couch; and there was silence in the tent, and no light save that made by the smouldering embers of the fire that was in the centre. After a while the man asked: —

“Why are you so silent and sad to-night, wife of mine? Are you not happy to be home again, and to be my wife, and to be here in your own *can-nee*?”

“My heart is very heavy, husband, because of the law of Seh-now-wuff.”

“What law of Seh-now-wuff?” asked her husband.

Keahnatch rose to a sitting posture, her long black hair falling about her shoulders. She gazed wildly at her husband for a moment, and then said:—

“Te-Aguen, I have sinned and I have been sinned against. I have broken the law of Seh-now-wuff, and the medicine men will kill me if they know. I should have told you sooner, but I wanted to steal a day or two of happiness. But is not your love for me strong enough and great enough, so that you will protect me and have me sent safely back to the school?”

“What law have you broken? What speech of the insane is this that you are using? What mean you, woman?” asked the man, springing to his feet with a look of fear in his eyes.

“I have broken the law, husband,” replied the wife, her head sinking into her hands.

“But what law?” asked her husband, almost fiercely.

“The law that says it is death for a Ute woman to sin with a man of another color. I have sinned,—I have been deceived,—and —and ruined, and by a white man of the school. And —and, in time, a child will be born unto me,—and it will be of mixed blood,—and it must be killed.”

The woman hid her face, and sobbed.

The face of Te-Aguen froze into granite. His eyes shone like the eyes of a mountain lion that is about to spring. His blood surged hotly through his veins, he clenched his hands so tightly that his nails brought blood from his palms, and he ceased to be a lover or a husband or a man, and became a wild beast,—an animal thirsting for blood.

“And you have done this thing to me!” he hissed, grasping the shrinking woman rudely by her bare shoulder. “To me who have watched you grow from infancy, who have guarded you and fought for you when you were a little child, who have had no other loves or lovers, in order that I might wait until you reached the years of womanhood, and then take you for my only wife! Woman, speak! Unsay the lie you have said, and tell me you have but jested!”

“I have spoken truth, my husband. Forgive, forgive!” moaned the woman.

“Forgive, and make myself the butt of every fool in the tribe who can fashion his mouth to a rude jest? Forgive, and break the sacred and ancient law of our god? O woman, fool, beast, prostitute! I will not forgive, I will not forget! I have loved you, and now I hate you. I have trusted you: now I shall kill you! Have you any incantation to say to soothe

the wrath of the Great Spirit? If so, say instantly; for your life shall go out as quickly as the melting of a snow-drop."

The woman fell forward on her face, crying aloud in terror, and feebly holding up her hands to ward off her danger. The stone face of the man melted from its rigidity, and writhed and worked in passion. He sprang upon the prostrate woman, caught her long hair fiercely in his hands, wound it in a noose around her throat, and pulled upon the strands like a madman. The woman's breath gurgled in her throat, her eyes stood out from her face, her tongue turned black and protruded from her mouth, and her fingers clutched and writhed in a paroxysm of pain and terror and supplication.

"The law of Seh-now-wuff," muttered the madman, "the law of Seh-now-wuff shall be avenged! Die, you reptile, you breaker of laws!"

He drew the strands of hair tighter and tighter about the blackened throat of the suffocating woman, he held her head down in the dust of the floor, and finally he threw the quivering body away from him so savagely that it struck the opposite wall of the tent. He stood for a moment glowering down upon the body of her who had been his sweetheart and his wife. He saw the quivering of her limbs and hands;

and then another burst of red fury ran through his savage blood, and he sprang upon the dying form and trampled the writhing face into the ground with his feet. And the law of Seh-now-wuff had been avenged.

That was all in the time of the long ago, before the Indians had heard any laws but the cruel ones of their own savage god; but it is the memory of that dying face, of the protruding eyes, of the swelling tongue, and of the quivering limbs, that has been before the mental vision of Te-Aguen ever since, and that causes him to be miserable, even in spite of the fact that he has become a chief and is noted for his eloquence. When he is alone and silent, always there comes to his mind the memory of a dimly lighted tent, of the cold moonbeams shining through a slit in the tent wall, of a smouldering fire, and of a hideous, horrible, crazed being — that is himself — that has killed all that the world held that he loved or that was dear to him.

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